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MONDAY 1 APRIL 1996

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Deep freeze plan for BSE beef

COLIN BROWN Chief Political Correspondent

Millions of tons of beef at risk from BSE or "mad cow disease" may have to be stored in deepfreeze warehouses until more incinerators can he huilt to de-

stroy the carcasses in Britain. Cash to build more incinerators is expected to be a key part of a £2hn deal being thrashed out today by Douglas Hogg, the Minister of Agriculture, and EU ministers to restore consumer confidence and get the worldwide ban on British beef exports

The retail trade was also

assure the public that beef is from BSE-free herds, after reports of a pick-up in trade.

Britain was trying to secure hargaining hetween officials package, the price to be paid to farmers faced with a slump in the beef market, and the amount of the bill to be met by the British taxpayer.

Ministers have accepted that the key to restoring confidence is the selective disposal plans, and have been considering a massive programme for up to 4.5 million eows, demanded by proposing the introduction of a the National Farmers' Union.

The nine existing incinerators in Britain could not cope, but British ministers have privately ruled out hurning the carcasses in open fields. The the package last night in hard Independent was told by one Cabinet source: "We will have over the extent of the slaughter to huild more facilities. We can't have burning in the fields. It's got to be done in a proper-ly controlled way."

Most of the condemned meat may have to be stored in deep freeze until it can be destroyed. In order to restore public confidence in the beef industry, it would have to he stored in tight security to avoid it finding its way on to the black market, The nine privately owned in-

einerators could cope with 3,000 careasses a week, if they ran round the clock. Some estimates suggest up to 15,000 carcasses a week may have to be destroyed, if the large-scale plan is adopted. That could require an additional 36 incinerators, at a cost of £1m each, but the use of storage could reduce the number of new incinerators to single figures.

Sir David Naish, the NFU president whose slaughter plan forced a Government U-turn last week, hinted at the plans on the BBC's Breakfast with Frost, Obviously at the moment, the incineration capacity is not

there. But in today's techno-

Ministers have not yet produced detailed plans of where additional incinerators could be huilt, but they may be close to existing sites to limit planning problems. A han was imposed

logical advances, there is no doubt at all it quickly could be

put in place. The animals would

have to be slaughtered proper-

ly in slaughter houses to make

sure the brain and the spinal

cord were removed, and were

be burnt straight away could be

temporarily stored. I accept

there is a logistics problem.

hut this is much deeper than

"All the meat that could not

burnt at high temperature.

last week on the sale of beet from cattle over 30 months old most at risk from BSE. Milk is Mr Hogg will today press the European Commissioner. Franz Fischler, for the ban to be

lifted before negotiating the final details with agriculture ministers in Luxembourg Sir Leon Brittan, the vicepresident of the commission, said the European Union was ready to bear a "serious" proportion of the cost if a mass

necessary to quell fears on beef He indicated that Brussels could foot the bill for anything

slaughter of British cartle was

between 50 per cent and the full Hogg's Cahinet position. There were continued angry cost of any large-scale culling. The extent to which the British taxpayer will have to pick up part of the bill was one of the

issues being discussed by offi-cials yesterday. The Cabinet source said it would be "ridiculous" to carry on destroying cattle and burn-ing the beef, for years ahead, af-

ter BSE had been eradicated. Some senior Tory MPs believed Mr Hogg would be moved in the summer reshuffle by the Prime Minister, but that has now been made impossible by weekend reports that his resignation had been rejected by the Prime attack on Labour has secured Mr

recriminations for the collapse in the beef market. Brian Mawhinney, the Conservative Party chairman, rejected a charge by Tony Blair, the Labour Leader, that the Government had been incompetent.

"I have never heard Opposition politicians hehave so disgracefully and so put at risk the national interest because they thought they could grub a few votes," Dr Mawhinney said on the BBC's On the Record.

Supermarket sales np, page 2 Lost faith in scientists, page 17 1866 cattle plague, page 19

Diplomats face Iraq arms charge

CHRIS BLACKHURST

Two British diplomats may face criminal prosecution for perverting the course of justice in the case of the arms dealer Reginald Dunk, who was wrongfully convirted of exporting machine-

guns to lraq. And for the first time in the arms-to-Iraq saga, the Home Office has agreed to pay compensation in what amounts to tactadmission that Mr Dunk was denied a fair trial.

The diplomats - Zambia High Commissioner Patrick Nixon and the Ethiopia number two Carsten Pigott - have been named in the Scotland Yard report into Mr Dunk's successful appeal in 1994 against his conviction nine years earlier. The findings have been sent to the Crown Prosecution service. Both diplomats were named and criticised in the Scott Report for pressing possible defence witnesses not to testify in the husinessman's trial.

Documents submitted to the Scott inquiry revealed officials had "friendly words" with ambassadors from Iraq and Jordan, telling them to claim diplomatic immunity for their staff and asking them not to help Mr Dunk. Mr Nixon and Mr Pigott, then desk officers in London,

EXCLUSIVE

oversaw the operation. Sir Richard Scott said the two men could not have "supposed otherwise" that their behaviour amounted to impeding the course of justice.

The decision by Michael Howard, Home Secretary, to accept a claim by Mr Dunk's so-



Reginald Dunk: Wrongful conviction for Iraq exports

licitor for compensation for his wrongful prosecution is an indication of how seriously the Government views the case. It is also a possible attempt to avoid his going to court and causing more embarrassment.

Mr Dunk's solicitor, Lawrence Kormonick, said: "The Home "cleared their lin Secretary has decided to make gal standpoint".

public funds as compensation in respect of his conviction on 4 November 1985 which was subsequently reversed by the Court of

Mr Kormonick is now preparing a schedule of loss for his client which is likely to total more than £500,000. Overnight, following his conviction, husiness dried up and clients stayed away. He had to cut jobs and dip into his life savings to keep the company

In 1985, Mr Dunk, now 76, who ran Atlantic Commercial, a private arms-dealing firm, was £7,500 costs, after pleading guilt to attempting to smuggle 200 Sterling sub-machine guns to Iraq via Jordan. Alexander Schlesinger, a consultant to At-lantic, was also fined. A third defendant James Edmiston, was

acquitted, At the trial Mr Dunk changed his plea from not guilty to guilty after Jordanian and Iraqi diplomats in London refused to appear in his defence.

Mr Pigott told the Scott in-quiry he and Mr Nixon had acted in good faith and pointed out they were acting at the request of Customs, the prosecuting au-thority, which they assumed had " cleared their lines from the le-

Down to earth with 3.8 million miles on the clock



The space shuttle Atlantis comes into land at the Edwards air force base in California after its 10-day, 3.6 million mile odyssey Photograph: AP

IN BRIEF

Welsh Glyndebourne

The singer Dame Gwyneth Jones has bought Craig-y-nos castle in the Upper Tawe valley in south Wales to turn into an opera teaching and performing centre which she is giving to the

Drinks ads offensive Martini's campaign featuring

ugly people who needed cosmetic surgery to consume the beautiful people's drink has heen ruled offensive by the Independent Television Com-

Today's weather Everywhere will have some

sunshine, but Scotland and Northern Ireland will have Page ref



Blair throws Major TV gauntlet | Traffic wardens

chief Political Correspondent

A head-to-head televised debate hetween John Major and Tony Blair was in prospect last night after Brian Mawhinney, the chairman of the Conservative Party, refused to rule out the challenge for the Prime Minister and the Labour leader to face each other in the run-up to the general election.

The event would mark a dramatic shift in British politics towards the style of the United States presidential elections, where such contests are now part of the routine of the hustings, and can count heavily in people's perceptions of the party leaders.

It would be the first time that prime minister had been pre-

pared to enter a public debate on television with the Leader of the Opposition. Margaret Thateher refused to join in televised debates with Neil Kinnock on the grounds that it enhanced his esteem. Mr Major has previously hrushed Labour calls for dehates aside with contempt, branding them a game for losers.

But Tory strategists believe there could be a clear advantage in a contest. Mr Major led his party in the opinion polls at the last election by several points, and the party is certain to exploit his personal appeal. The Tories also have a trick

up their sleeves, if they agree to the match. They are likely to say they will go ahead, providing Labour puts up other frontbenchers in similar debates.

The Tories want to see: John Prescott, Labour's deputy leader against Michael Heseltine, the Deputy Prime Minister, Margaret Beckett, Labour's spokeswoman on trade and industry, against Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade; and Harriet Harman, Labour's health

spokeswoman, against the Sec-retary of State Stephen Dorrell. Mr Blair yesterday seized on the idea, which emerged in informal contacts between the television producers and Con-servative Central Office aides. The Labour leader said he would be "delighted" to accept

the challenge.
"I am taking this more or less as a firm offer, in which case it is accepted with alacrity," he said on BBC1's Breakfast With Frost programme.

"If they want to have a debate there is a very simple way of having it, which is to bring forward

the date of the general election.
"I don't believe there is any purpose or reason in governing left for this government. They are weak, they are incompetent, they are drifting. They have given no direction to the country whatsoever and if they want to put this to the test they should put it to the test sooner rather

than later." Meanwhile, an April Fool's prank by the Labour Party was expected to enrage Tory leaders at Conservative Central Office today. A spoof advertisement was placed in a national newspaper tirging readers to telephone the Tory headquarters in Smith Square to claim a £2,030 refund

in backdated (ax relief.

face the flak

JOJO MOYES

Traffic wardens have always expected a degree of hostility the two-fingered salute or the odd expletive, perhaps. But Cardiff's wardens are apparently anticipating something more - they are being fitted with

bullet-proof body armour. Police in South Wales say their meter men and women are facing a rise in assaults and the use of weapons as they try to enforce parking regulations.

They are fitting at least 100 wardens with flak jackets which can withstand the blast of a .357 magnum handgun at elose range. The jackets are part of across a car bonnet.

officers in South Wales with

protective clothing. The hullet-proof or stabproof vests, also issued to colagues in the seaside town of Redear in Cleveland, have been welcomed by the traffic wardens

union, Unison. It claims its members need more protection. Last year traffie wardens in South Yorkshire began training in martial arts, while wardens in the London borough of Hackncy were given self-defence lessons after 16 needed hospital treatment in nine months. Assaults ranged from a baseball

bat attack to being thrown



But some of Cardiff's wardens are not convinced that the jackets will protect them against road-raging motorists.

One warden said yesterday:

Drivers don't shoot or stab us - they try to run us over. I can't see a flak-jacket giving us much protection against that."

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Water industry targeted for shake-up

REBECCA FOWLER

The water industry is facing a long-awaited shake-up in a attempt to reduce profits and slash bills, amid growing concern over the lack of competition among companies which enjoy regional monopolies.

John Gummer, the Secretary of State for the Environment, will announce the proposals today to force the industry to be more competitive. The water companies have scooped a peting networks, and a national

Robert Maclennan, the Liber-

al Democrat spokesman on

constitutional affairs, has inti-

mated his party's willingness to

consider the system in private

talks on constitutional change

with Robin Cook, the shadow Foreign Secretary and the shad-

ow cahinet's principal advo-

Mr Maclennan is understood

to have suggested that an al-

ternative vote (AV) system

would have to be "topped up"

to an extent with another sys-

tem, such as picking addition-

al MPs from party lists, to inject

Any move away from the Lib-

eral Democrats' preference for

a fully proportional single trans-

amount to a hig concession. But

more proportionality.

representation.

proportional

growing consumer resentment.

An increase in competition may result in hills being reduced by up to £65. It is also expected to reduce the excessive pay rises and profits that bave won water chiefs their "fat cat" titles, and made the industry, privatised in 1989, so unpopular.

The water chiefs appeared to be protected from intervention because it would be too expensive for rivals to set up comnation's water is currently drawn only from nearby reservoirs and other local sources.

However, under the new scheme, Mr Gummer is expected to suggest that it is feasible tn construct pipelines linking reservoirs between different regions, which would allow them to undercut each other. Householders in the

build at a cost of billions. The water from a cheaper company over the border.

The proposals, which have been drawn up in collaboration with OFWAT, the water industry watchdog, will come at a particularly sensitive time for the water companies, where a oumber of take-over hids are being negotiated. Severn Trent, one of the biggest water companies and which is based in Birmingham, South-west, where hills reach announced it was launching a the highest average at £317, may take-over hid for South West

record £1.6bn profits, causing water grid would take years to be given the option of buying Water if it was granted permission by the regulatory authorities. The same company is facing a separate bid from Wes-

> In a foretaste of the proposed changes, John Major told Cooservatives in Harrogate this weekend that introducing competition had already forced down hills in the gas, telephone and electricity industries. "This hasn't happened in the water industry yet, but it will," he said. Since the water industry was

have further infuriated the publie by making dramatic job cuts, while creaming off more bonuses for themselves from their share option schemes. United Utilities, the power and water group, announced 1,700 ioh losses last week only months af-

ter a £1.8bn merger. The industry responded cautiously to the proposals this weekend. A spokesman for the Water Services Association (WSA), which represents water

privatised the "fat cat" chiefs and sewerage companies, said: "The whole issue of further competition raises a whole range of complex technical. regulatory and legal matters."

He added: "The government must be careful not to rush at this and cause the kind of errors and upheaval seen in the gas industry. Member companies of WSA will be happy to work with government and OFWAT...so long as government is guided by common sense, not ideology. Leading article, page 18

route to a dealer. The RUC said the cannabis, with a street value of £15,000, was handed in to officers in the border town of Newry. The IRA issued a statement to the BBC saying the haul was destined for a key supplier in south Down. RUC drug squad officers were investigating.

Coach six face court

Drugs seized by IRA handed to police

A Catholic priest handed thousands of pounds of drugs to police in Northern Ireland

yesterday which the IRA

claimed they had seized en-

Six teenagers will face a court after the theft of a British Airways coach. The youths, aged from 15 to 17, appear before magistrates at Chippenham. Wiltshire, on May 7. One of the youngsters is accused of taking the vehicle and driving without insurance, and the other five. including three girls, are accused of aggravated vehicle theft.

BBC chief's pledge

The new chairman of the BBC, Sir Christopher Bland, has said in a letter to National Heritage Secretary Virginia Bottomley that the corporation's first responsibility was to the licence payer and that he promised to ensure editorial independence. Meanwhile, BBC newscasters will be heard across America from today as the World Service launches a new international news programme in co-production with public broadcasters in the United States.

Boy accused of rape A teenaged boy has been charged with sex attacks against two young girls. The 15-year-old, from the Oldham area, has been charged with raping a 13year-old girl in February this year and attempting to rape an eight-year-old girl in August 1995. He will appear before

PC is a wheel gent A sympathetic police constable drove to cash machine and withdrew £160 so that two on-duty district nurses could pay to have their cars released h

wheel-clampers in Birmingham

Oldham Youth Court today.

city centre. Classic bargain

The last two Jaguar XJS sport cars will roll off the production line this week, marking the en of the classic model's 21-year history. The final two examples for sale have already been snapped up by private buyers at the list price of £50,000 - and their value is expected to climb to around £250,000.

School sackings

A chaplain and a junior maste have been sacked by an £11,000-a-year school after admitting possession of child orn pictures. The Rev Bria Boucher and Trevor Jones los their jobs at Hurstpierpoint College, near Brighton, six weeks after being arrested after a search of their accommodation. No pupils at the col-lege were involved. Both were later given a caution.

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14.

plans offer compromise with Labour Parties close to compromise on vote reform The STV scheme long PATRICIA WYNN DAVIES favoured by the Liberal De-The first sign has emerged of a mocrats would involve voting in multi-member constituencies covering between three and five current parliamentary seats.

Lib -Dems conference: Voting reform

the Liberal Democrats and Labour over reforming the sys-tem of voting in elections to the AV has been criticised for not House of Commons. really being "proportional" at all Scnior Liberal Democrats since it cannot guarantee that seats won reflect the total votes are now discussing moves in the direction of the so-called "Alcast for each of the parties.

ternative Vote" - a system that But one senior Liberal Deallows voters to mark candidates mocrat figure said: "There is a view that we could live with it, in order of preference and which Tony Blair, the Labour provided it's topped up with leader, could ultimately support. something else. According to a senior source,

The latest crah-like manoeuvres by the two parties on the issue comes a few weeks after the Labour leadership began signalling that minds had opened on the question of preferential voting.

The signs were the first in-

dication of change since the late John Smith rejected a similar recommendation from the Labour-sponsored Plant commission, opting to hold a referendum instead.

A referendum on electoral reform would not be held by a Blair government until at least the middle of a first parliament.

Mr Cook and Mr Maclennan are also engaged in the pressing issue of how the parties should handle legislation in the first year for a Scottish Parliaferable vote (STV) would ment. Senior party figures want to put it through a committee some party strategists believe rather than the floor of the that it could be sold to the Lib-House to avoid a bitter struggle with opposition Tories.

eral Democrat grass roots. Nicholson berates 'heartless Tories'

The former Tory MP Emma Nicholson, who defected to the Liberal Democrats last year, was applauded yesterday when she attacked her old party's "heartless policies" on homelessness.

Speaking at the Scottish Liberal Democrats annual conference in Aberdeen, Mrs Nicholson received a huge wel-come when she told delegates how Tory policy was "vastly inadequate" for tackling the increasing problem of homeless people on British streets.

Referring to her defection, she said "1995 was the year my tolerance for heartless Conservative policies ran out".

Conservative Central Office had said her decision to leave was not due to political differences hut was over her annoyance at not having achieved higher office within the party. Since then the war of words between herself and Central Office has been bloody.

terday Mrs Nicbolson had insisted John Major was paralysed by indecision and relying on what she called the "worst, hard-faced, populist instincts of people who would have been no more than a small and disregarded right-wing pressure group in the Tory party that 1 joined 21 years ago. The party has changed - and for the

bate on homelessness, Mrs Nicholson said policies of bed and breakfast accommodation left mothers and children on the street during the day. She claimed as the situation worsened mothers and children would be on the streets "24 hours a day".

In her address during a de-

The conference motion opposed the new Asylum and Immigration Bill and right-to-huy legislation which delegates ctaimed was worsening the hometess situation in both rur-



hecame the latest seaside town in Britain to protest over the Royal National Lifeboat Institution's plans to replace its ifeboat houses.

On the historic Cobb, one of Britain's famous seaside landmarks, local protesters gathered and carried banners attacking the RNLI plans, which they claim will destroy the town's architectural benitage.

The RNLI is planning to build a modern mini-headquarters which would directly overlook the Cohh, blocking

against the plans, which will go before a planning committee at Bridport on Thursday, is the latest in a series of nation-wide demonstrations against new RNLI buildings.

In 1991, the wealthy philanthropist, Eugenie Boucher, left £4m to the RNLI. The lifeboat charity opted to spend the money on improving or replacing the numerous RNLI boat-houses throughout the United King-

Since work began the furore caused by both the buildings designs and often the scale and location of the new boat-houses

communities angry that heritage - and often their seaview - is being destroyed.

Before yesterday's demon-Suffolk coast. Newquay and St Ives in Cornwall, Ilfracombe in Devon, Hastings in East Sussex. Largs on the west coast of Scotland and at Cromer on the north coast of Norfolk.

In Lyme Regis the RNLI is planning to build a boat shed, offices, erew rooms and a shop on a site overlooking the Cobb. Protesters carried placards stating: "Our Space is impor-

One resident, Charlotte Jack, RNLI plans. Miss Jack claimed wbo joined in yesterday's protest, said: "Every time we look at a revision of the plans, stration, there had also been an- they seem to get bigger and biggry protests at Aldeburgh on the ger. It is an outrage that this being treated so disgracefully by the RNLI. Nobody can object to an organisation which has, as its prime purpose, the saving of lives. But after the Boucher bequest they have behaved tive

After the Cohb protest yes-terday some of the local residents were involved in scuffles with members of the local pow-

she had been threatened by one member of the club and told she should leave Lyme Regis. The RNLI has said in the past that it regretted the controverheautiful historic place is sies. A spokesman recently commented: "We have 216

lifeboat stations. Historically, they have always been at the centre of coastal villages in areas that are now very sensi-Unfortunately, modern

hoats are higger and more sophisticated and their crews need room to train. So the facilities have had to get higger."

Half-price offer clears beef from shelves

NICOLE VEASH

Thousands of people across the United Kingdom ignored the health scares of the past week and settled down to a traditional Sunday joint of roast beef yesterday.

On Saturday, all 363 Sains-hury's stores sold out of fresh beef, after shoppers flocked to buy it on special offer at half price. It was the first time in 125 years of trading that the supermarket chain was left with no beef on its shelves.

trading director, said on Saturday night: "Over the last 12 hours we have sold more British beef than during the whole of the last 12 days combined."

Despite government warn-ings of a small risk of catching Creutzfeldt-Jakoh disease (CJD), the human equivalent of bovine spongiform enceph-alopathy (BSE), from infected cattle, shoppers at Sainsbury's superstore in New Cross Gate, south-east London, remained committed to British beef.

manager, said he had never seen beef sales like it. "All I have had is positive feedback from custhere was anything wrong with it. It just goes to prove, if the price is right people will buy it. he said. But he predicted that beef sales would be slow once the of-

fer ended early next week. Martin Crawley, 51, of Nunhead, said he was taking advantage of the offer and stocking up on beef. "I have not stopped eating British heef because

Julian Parkhurst, the deputy there is nothing wrong with it," he said. "I'm going to have a roast joint for my Sunday dinner and put a few pieces in the freezer for later in the week." Rebecca Jestico, 24, of New

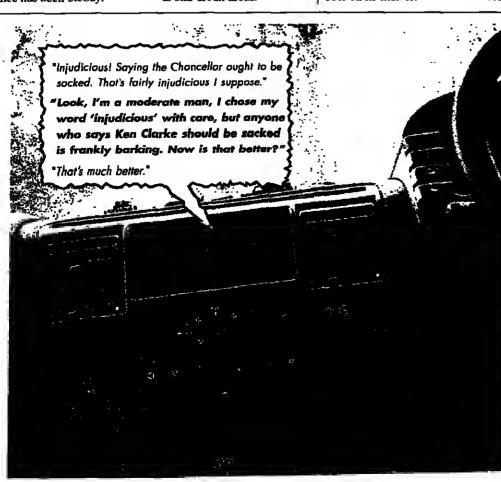
Cross, said: "f'm going to stock up on it at this price, especially as chicken and lamb has

Some shoppers remained un-convinced about the safety of beef. Steve Moss, 39, of Peck-ham, said: "Although it is cheap, I just don't know about eating it." And David Sefton, of Cul-

simistic. "My days are numhered, so I'll go on eating it anyway," he said.

A spokesman for Sainsbury's said the company's "Farm Assured" scheme, which guarantees meat supplies from farms to stores, had gone some way in securing customer belief in the safety of beef.

"It is fair to say that consumer confidence has returned and people are continuing to take advantage of this great offer."



GOOD MORNING MINISTER, THIS IS YOUR WAKE-UP CALL.

As Michael Heseltine knows, an early morning visit to the Today studio isn't something you can do half asleep. Join John Humphrys and the team for Britain's most listened-to daily breakfast programme. Monday to Friday from 6.30am, Saturday from 7.00am

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TV team's discovery of Jesus' tomb dismissed by scholars

gious Affairs Correspondent

THE INDEPENDENT

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Forts that the tomb of Jesus Cist might have been found bitelevision crew looking for acaster special were yesterdismissed by scholars. thought it was an April fool day too early," said Pro-

fessor Geza Vermes, probably England's leading authority on first century Judaism, about a report in the Sunday Times that a casket which had once contained bones identified as those of "Jesus son of Joseph" had been found in an museum warehouse in Jerusalem, where it has

The team from BBC 2's son of Jesus". All were empty, believed that the significance of this discovery might have been overlooked by a Jewish archaeologist: the bone casket was found in a 1st century tomh alongside those of two women called Mary, a Matthew, and

Heurt of the Matter programme having been looted long ago. "It is easy to miss their sig-

nificance simply because they have none," said Professor Vermes yesterday. "These are among the most common names in the Palestine of that period. A Jewish archaeologist, seeing these names, would

His incredulity was echoed by

the Dean of Liehfield, Dr Tom Wright. "This is no more than an interesting coincidence. Any suggestion that the other names refer to Jesus's mistress and illegitimate son are utterly laughable." He said the hody would have had to have been

simply think 'Oh, more of them'. left in its original tomb for a year to decompose. The bones which remained would then have been removed and placed in a special

casket or ossuary. These were collected in the tombs of an extended family. Ten ossuaries marked with the name of Jesus have been found

Welsh Glyndebourne: Gwyneth Jones plans festival at Victorian singer's castle

Antiquities Authority, was also dismissive. "I would not say that it deserves a special interest other than the chance of the appearance of the names . . . I can't say a possibility that it is the tomb of the Holy Family does not exist at all, but I think such

a possibility is close to zero."

Jesus could not be found, even by the most reliable archaeological methods, is entailed by Christian orthodoxy. He was, the Bible says, raised from the dead and his first tomb found empty, so that there would have been no bones to transfer

Unmarried mothers face losing benefits

ENDA COOPER

to 50,000 unmarried mothface losing their benefits in Government's latest crackwn on social-security fraud. ter Lilley, the Secretary of ate for Social Security, is excted to announce new meares tomorrow to try to cut 00m-a-year fraud from the uld Support Agency. The news comes as a report

s some mothers have been under "considerable presre" to co-operate with the ency despite evidence that ir former partners were vient. The study, hy the eph Rowntree Foundation, plished on the third an-lersary of the Child Support , also says poorer families e lost out under the radireforms of the CSA and t working mothers claiming nily Credit have heen unto rely on maintenance ing paid regularly to them

ir Lilley's proposals are aled at mothers who claim Hefits while secretly getting ho from ex-husbands and biriends. It will be disclosed il report to be sent to the allrity Commons Social Securielect Committee this week.

2-year-old boy died yester-

after fire broke out in a

gage where three friends had sint the night as an adventure.

The boys had told their par-

es that each was staying at the

er's house on the Roundhills

tate in Waltham Abbey, Es-

Instead, they slept on a old

fittress in a garage used for

The children used candles to

int the garage heneath three

fis. The fire broke out after

to of the children left to do a

Thomas Flynn, the boy who

ed, is thought to have been

ercome hy smoke as he slept.

was not until firemen had put

t the fire that his body was

covered. His two 12-year-old

ends were later being com-

rted by their families. An 84-

ar-old woman who lived

ove the garage was treated smoke inhalation.

Police said an inquest would

held into the boy's death.

Bex fire brigade said the

gage was used by the parents

opne of the boys to store fur-

nure. Thomas's hody was

respaper round.

Last year Frank Field, chairman of the committee, told the Commons the agency knew of at least 16,000 cases where divorced or separated parents were colluding "to defraud the taxpayer".

lowed to withhold the father's name it they have a good reason or it would cause "harm or undue distress"

By alleging she is in danger of being beaten up or threatened by her ex-partner, a mother on henefit can stop maintenance heing enforced through the CSA.

Subject to an interview, she can continue to receive full benefit and the absent father pays nothing - or at least nothing through the agency.

A spokeswoman for the CSA said that when women refused to name the father "we have to take each case on individual merit. Our officers have to be very careful and look at all different factors before making a

At present those who do not co-operate with the CSA face having their henefit cut by 20 per cent for six months and then 10 per cent for a further 12

But Mr Lilley wants an im-

Boy, 12, dies in fire

on night adventure

found as firelighters were turn-ing over and damping down re-

mains at the back of the garage.

mortem examination would be

held today at St George's hos-

The dead hoy's family later spoke of their grief at the "stu-

pital, in Ilford, Essex.

Scotland Yard said a post

on lone parent benefits of £46.50 a week if the mother fails to co-operate with the CSA. He is said to he considering stopping the henefit altogether but

his would need new legislation. Benefits paid for each child £15.95 a week for under 11 and £23.40 for those aged 11 to 15 - would not be affected.

But the Rowntree report said that some mothers who had asked to be exempted from providing information about the lathers of their children on the grounds of "harm or undue distress" had come under considerable pressure to co-operate despite evidence that their former partners were violent.

Karin Pappenheim, director of the National Council for One Parent Families said: "It is extremely important that the provisions to protect vulnerable one mothers and children are maintained for the many mothers who have very genuine reasons not to involve the father. That protection has been work-

It is essential fraud is tackled hut it would he a tragedy if that is achieved through measures that may jeopardise the safety of women and children who are

pid accident" which rohhed of them of the football-loving boy.

who had three sisters. Rosie, 18

A distraught Michelle said:

"It was such a stupid accident. It was nobody's fault, just one of those things. It was just a nor-

mal sleep-out, just a camp-out

Other relatives described

Thomas, who attended the King

Harold school in Waltham

Abbey, as a fun-loving child who

liked nothing better than kick-ing a foothall around with

friends. His dream was to play

Tommy's mother Barbara,

38, a teacher, was too grief

Groups of parents and chil-

dren later gathered outside the

burned-out garage to pay their respects. The families left trib-

Floral tributes with messages

written by children were left by

the charred garage door. One group of children said: "He was a great friend and he loved to play football, any sport and

utes and said quiet prayers.

for his favourite team, Spurs.

in a friend's garage."

stricken to speak.

computers."

Michelle, 17, and Joni, 15.



A Welsh Glyndebourne: Dame Gwyneth Jones and the architect Roger Clive-Powell (above) in the Victorian theatre created at Craig-y-nos, South Wales (below); by the celebrated diva Adelina Patti, which they plan to restore as a centre for opera



Modern-day diva rides to the rescue of Mme Patti's theatre

MICHAEL PRESTAGE

Welsh opera lovers, still in mourning after the Millennium Fund's refusal to hack a new opera house in Cardiff, have had their spirits lifted at the prospect of having their own Glyndebourne.

The internationally renowned Welsh soprano Dame Gwyneth Jones has bought the romantie castle of Craig-y-nos, in the Upper Tawe Valley of South Wales, and has gifted it to the nation. The castle will become a teaching and performing centre for opera. To help finance the castle's

purchase, Dame Gwyneth sold a property in Vienna. The gift to the Welsh nation also includes funds to establish a trust and manage it. "This is going to be my gift to my country from which my career has taken me

away for so long," she said.
Following the Millennium Fund's decision not to make a grant to the £86m Cardiff Bay opera house, it is hoped that Craig-y-nos will grow to rival the annual Glyndebourne summer festival, in the shadow of the

Fittingly, Craig-y-nos was once the home of another renowned opera singer, the Victorian bel canto soprano Madame Adelina Patti. It contains a 150-seat theatre for opera that still features some of the original scenery.

Dame Gwyneth, born at

Pontnewydd, near Cwmbran, now lives in Switzerland and is hest known for her performances in the dramatic soprano repertory as Puccini's Turandot, Wagner's Brunn-hilde, and Richard Strauss's Elektra. She was at the castle this weekend. "The moment I stepped inside its gates," she said, "I fell under the spell of Craig-y-nos. When I stood in the music room I had this vision of the castle coming back to its for-

"It is going to be a place for young people to study and will hopefully see an end to Welsh singers having to go to London when they should be studying at home. There will also be summer festivals."

The Dame Gwyneth Jones Patti Trust will administer the castle and applications will he made to the Lottery and the Arts Council for grants towards the £6m cost of restoring it to its Victorian splendour.

The castle was bought by Mme Patti, in 1878. She lived there until her death in 1919, adding extensively to it. After her death, it was used as a hospital until a consortium of local husinessmen bought it in 1986, but their plans to turn it into a hotel and restaurant were hit by the recession.

The architect Roger Clive-Powell envisages the present project will take three years to complete. The institutional buildings from its days as a hospital will be removed and the original terraces, gardens and open auditorium restored.

Penny Jones, wife of the provious owner, Dr J T Jones, will be a trustee. She said: "It is very fitting that it is our own Welshboro, world leading soprano Gwyneth Jones, who is doing this. That she is resurrecting what was Adelina Patti's country homemakes it doubly so. From a diva of the past 10

one of the present." Mrs Jones said it was an important part of Wales's heritage

our in court on kidnap charges

Thomas Flynn: Overcome

D MOYES

people will appear in con today charged in conne on with the three-day kidnanf a 27-year-old woman. te on Friday night, officers the Organised Crime p freed the woman, who een held to ransom by an d gang since Wednesday. rge amounts of money, ildrugs and firearms - ining five handguns - were

e four accused, include a and and wife, plus the husband's brother. All are heing held in custody and will appear at Horseferry Road magistrates court, in cen-

tral London. Barclay George Walters, 37, unemployed, from Harlesden, north-west London, is charged with kidnapping and false im-prisonment, and three firearms offences, including possession of a firearm with intent to endanger life. Anurdoh Sharma, 31, also

unemployed, and his hrother Sanjcev Sharma, 27, both of Hounslow, west London, are urday and her condition was one scooped the lottery jackpol

charged with kidnap and false imprisonment.

Sanjeev Sharma's 25-yearold wife, Dipty Sharma, also of Hounslow, is also charged with false imprisonment.

A fifth suspect, a 23-year-old female student has been released on bail to return on 13 April, pending further inquiries. Two other suspects were released without charge.

The victim suffered several injuries and was treated in hospital under police guard. She was discharged on Sat-

About £200m was believed to Perhaps most disappointed was an anonymous punter from have been wagered over the weekend in what is believed to Sale in Greater Manchester, have been Britain's higgest ever who was just 90 minutes away from winning £183,000 on a £5

stake.

Millions of people gambled He was hoping Aston Villa would win their FA Cup semi fion a host of top sporting events which coincided for the first time with the National Lottery. nal to clinch a 12-way bet, but they lost 3-0 to Liverpool. but the vast majority ended up Manchester United, who

beat Chelsea 2-I had earlier behousewives' choice Superior come his 11th correct prediction and he had already forecast the results of 10 matches on Sat-

A Ladbrokes spokesman said: "You cannot describe what those 90 minutes must have been like for him. We may never know who he is now. It was the bet of a lifetime running on

Betting frenzy leaves punters out of pocket

to two exciting semi-finals." An estimated £70m was riding on the 28 runners at Aintree. And although favourite Rough Quest rode home victorious, an army of once-a-year gamhlers had opted for Superior Finish, leaving bookmakers faced with

a £2m pay out if it won. Many had been lured to gam-

ble by the promise that the unusually small field gave them the best chance of picking the win-

ner in a generation. Money poured in on the 9-1 shot trained by Jenny Pitman, known as the "Queen of Aintree", and ridden by Richard Dunwoody.

But Superior Finish evectually came only third - a result which did leave the bookies

smiling, however. Graham Sharpe, of William Hill, said: "It was a pretty good cost us lots more if Superior Finish had won or done better than

"The public - especially the once-a-year gambler - had latched on to it because of who trained it and who was riding it. "If it had come in it could have been disastrous for us," he

In the National Lottery, there was no jackpot winner, and fans of the weekly draw can now look forward to compeling for day and we certainly paid out a £20m rollover prize next week.

The every-day chocolate bar keeps the Easter egg in its place

co lics need not spend a me to satisfy their craving Easter, according to top critic Egon Ronay. asted 16 different chocolate and found the cheaper ds fared surprisingly well inst humry alternatives. of eight dark chocolate hars d by Mr Romay, the cheap of them all, Marks &

ncer's Swiss Estra Fine, at

59p per 100g, easily came out top. The har's "excitingly powerful" character nudged into second place the "good but ab-surdly expensive" (£3.10 per 100g) offering from Fortnum & Mason, the superior food emportum in Piccadilly, central

Out of eight milk chocolate bars sampled separately, the £3.10 ter Sport, dismissed as "crude",

Galaxy - a relative snip at 62p

Both were beaten, however, by Lindt Swiss Milk, which was praised for its "impressive halance between sugar and chocolate":

Bottom of the dark chocolate test was the German-made Rit-Fortnum & Mason har was while the United States-made

judged equal second with Hershey har came last in the Hershey bar, with Mr Ronay de- A spokeswoman for Fortnum & Paul Kirkwood, a spokesman for Gavin Tarrant, of Lindt UK. milk chocolate league."You need to be Sherlock Holmes to discover a chocolate taste in

In the Grand National, the

Finish, finished a disappointing

third and a few hours later oo

this," Mr Ronay said. Of other popular high street brands tasted, Cadbury's Dairy Milk came fifth in the milk section and Bourneville seventh among the dark chocolates. Nestle's milk chocolate Yorkie ing sure you choose a good bar finished only ahead of the chocolate.

out of pocket.

scribing it as "sickly sweet and a crude taste".

Overall, he said that he was surprised at the wide differences hetween the various chocolates. "There are more differences between the chocolate bars than meet the eye. The lesson is that it's well worth mak-

Mason said: "Our ehocolate hars are handmade by a small, independent chocolatier using fine-quality ingredients.

"As they are not mass produced we do not enjoy the economies of scale in production of large companies, hut we do ensure its taste is maintained

market performance. popularity."

Nestle Rowntree, defended the said: "I am not surprised company's product, saying: that our milk chocolate came "The results of the survey are out top, but I am surprised that not reflected by Yorkie's recent the plain chocolate did not

"Since last year's relaunch. A spokeswoman for Mars, sales of single Yorkie bars have manufacturers of Galaxy, said: increased by 15 per cent to "We are delighted with the re-£36m, demonstrating Yorkie's sults. Galaxy is a very smooth. by a high percentage of cocoa continued and widespread creamy chocolate which con-

THE REFERENDUM PARTY

A single currency is only one of the many fundamental problems of the European Union. Here is another.

European Law already overrules British Law.

Each year, the European Commission and the Council issue thousands of pages of "regulations and directives", which we in Britain would call laws.

According to the Treaty, European law (ie "regulations and directives") "shall be binding in its entirety and directly applicable in all Member States."

The European Court of Justice stated: "Every national court must apply Community law in its entirety and must accordingly set aside any provision of national law which may conflict with it, whether prior or subsequent to the Community rule".

It is now generally accepted by British judges that "the Treaty is the supreme law of this country taking precedence over Acts of Parliament." The courts of the United Kingdom have therefore accepted that their duty is to ensure the full and effective rule of Community law, even if it contradicts the unequivocal provisions of Acts of Parliament. Thus, Parliament has surrendered its sovereignty and the Treaty of Rome, as amended by the Single European Act and Maastricht, in effect, has become a written and supreme constitution.

The former Master of the Rolls, Lord Denning, stated, "No longer is European Law an incoming tide flowing up the estuaries of England. It is now like a tidal wave bringing down our sea walls and flowing inland over our fields and houses to the dismay of all."

So it is that Parliament has given up its right to pass laws on an ever increasing range of issues. That is why the referendum is necessary and one of the reasons why a referendum restricted to the issue of a single currency is insufficient.

If the people of Britain want the nation's laws to be enacted in Brussels, then they should be able to say so. The consequence would be that the electoral promises of the political parties would need to be limited to those issues over which they would retain some authority.

If, on the other hand, the British people want to bring power back home, they should also be allowed to say so. Should a majority agree, and the government acts accordingly, then laws enacted in Westminster could once again be supreme and general elections would no longer be the masquerade with which we are now faced.

If you wish to become a supporter of The Referendum Party please write to:

5 Galena Road, Hammersmith, London W6 0LT, Tel: 0181-563 1155, Fax: 0181-563 1156.

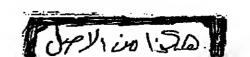
1. The Treaty of Rome as amended by the Single European Act and the Treaty of Maastricht. 2. The Treaty of Rome, Article 189(2). 3. Case 106/77 Amministrazione delle Finanze dello Stato v. Simmenthal (1978) ECR 629 at 643. 644. 4. Hoffman J. in Stoke-on-Trent City Council v. B&Q plc (1990) 3 CMLR 31 at 34. 5. Introduction to Gavin Smith, The ECJ: Judges or Policy Makers? 6. The original Treaty of Rome principally covered matters relating to the establishment of a common market. Maastricht radically expanded the areas of Europe's legal competence and went well beyond purely economic matters. The purpose, unequivocally, had become the creation of a European super-state.

Privatisat to more r





Ce



had to sacrifice almost all my

life-savings to keep the company

afloat - savings which had been

earmarked as a supplement to

business had been reduced by

the end of 1993 to a virtual shell

with no employees and no customers. Mr Dunk carried on try-

ing to secure orders, "in the

hope that eventually people

would forget we were convict-

British Aerospace and Vickers

had long since ceased to asso-

ciate with him. When he won his

appeal business started to return

and his once-desperate com-

pany is back in profit again.

However, the damage over the

"My health and that of my

wife has suffered enormously as

a direct result of the worry and

stress of the last 11 years," Mr

Dunk said, "Aged 76, I am also

no longer able to forecast when I shall be able to retire."

fice has accepted his compen-

sation claim he is not expecting

miracles. He has yet to receive

a penny and the Government is

still refusing to acknowledge the

Even though the Home Of-

years has been considerable

and not only financial.

It was a vain hope; clients like

ed criminals"

What had been a thriving

my state pension," he said.

Vrongful prosecution: Home Office admission leads to businessman's call for action against diplomats for abusing legal process

Cleared arms dealer presses for compensation

OMS BLACKHURST minster Correspondent

is home in Mansfield, Nothamshire, yesterday Regi-Dunk was sanguine about thews that the Home Office accepted he was wrongfulprosecuted 11 years ago for mpting to smuggle 200 Stersub-machine guns to Iraq Jordan in defiance of am pargo, and that senior diplois may now face prosecution denying him a fair trial. He said Michael Howard, the me Secretary, had still to acet his much larger claim for apensation for his company ich was almost wiped out by conviction, and there is alys the possibility that the lomats concerned may not be psecuted if the Crown Prospuion Service decides it would t be in the public interest. Mr Dunk feels that the fact all happened such a long time o and the obvious sensitivity the matter might vet rule in e diplomats favour, although

ould also be sauce for the gan-." he said. Now aged 76, Mr Dunk says at he will never forget the auma of the events of 1983 hen Customs and Excise offirs simultaneously raided his ouse and office in Mansfield, s daughter's home in London. s son's bouse in Guildford, rrey, and his accountant's and were not intended for Iraq,

could not see why. If they

ocess of law they should be

osecuted shouldn't they?

hat is sauce for the goose

people who abused the

offices in West Yorkshire. Alexander Schlesinger, a consultant to Atlantic Commercial, Mr Dunk's company, and exccutors from the gun manufacturer. Sterling Armament Company, also had their homes and offices raided.

Mr Dunk estimates the operation must have cost the taxpayer about £50,000. Seven officers visited just his house and searched it from top to bottom. including rummaging through his wife's wardrobe.

His son who knew nothing about the Jordan deal, was taken from his house in Surrey to the Customs Interrogation Unit in London, where he was detained overnight.

Despite having a valid export licence from the Department of and Industry and despite being able to produce assurances from the traqi Emhassy in London that the guns were not for Iraq but were a gift from Iraq to the Jordanian army, Mr Dunk's prosecution went ahead,

He was confident he had done nothing wrong and pleaded not guilty. But when his lawyer tried to take statements from Iraqi and Jordanian embassy staff in London he received a setback. The solicitor was told the authority for them to appear in his defence had been withdrawn. Unknown to Mr Dunk, the Iraqi and Jordanian ambassadors had been leant on by the Foreign Office.

Customs did not believe the elaim that the guns were a gift



Bitter memories: Reginald Dunk, who says the years of fighting for justice have taken their toll on his health

Photograph: Stuart Harrison/NewsTeam

and was determined to secure a conviction. Its officers had asked the Foreign Office to persuade the Iraqi and Jordanian diplomats not to appear. Without corroboration for

choice but to change his plea. In 1985, at the Old Bailey he behaviour of Patrick Nixon and pleaded guilty and was fined £20,000, It was only when the

behaviour of Patrick Nixon and Carsten Pigott - then desk officers at the Foreign Office in Scott arms-to-lraq inquiry London - came out, In July

and that of Mr Schlesinger were overturned by the Court

of Appeal. Mr Dunk said that it was only then that his business started to only was it not profitable, but I

his story Mr Dunk had no looked behind the prosecution 1994. Mr Dunk's conviction recover, "From February 1983, when Customs carried out their

loss to his company. Lawrence Kormonick, Mr Dunk's solicitor, said vesterday: He would like to see those responsible have to go through what he went through. He feels raid, until July 1994, when we given what happened it would won our appeal, the business he in the interests of justice for was virtually non-existent. Not those people to be treated as

Privatisation leads to 'more rail crime'

IRISTIAN WOLMAR insport Correspondent

warning that rail privatisation eading to an increased level s issued by the HM Inspecrs of Constabulary yesterday. The inspector who carried rformance of the British privatisation. insport Police, Peter Winship, rns that the recent changes ease in crime and a worse ar-up rate.

His report says that both scor managers and BTP officers rew a direct link between the rease in crime, together with e reduced number of detecns, and some of the changes at had occurred within the raily industry". These changes include the

ithdrawal of staff from stans, open access to railway emises, the increasing use of ver-only trains and the re-

acts

i South.

THINK WILL

luctance of rail staff to 'patrol' some late-night services". Mr Winship says that because of the reduced level of staffing, there are fewer witnesses to crimes crime on the railway network and therefore less chance of catching the culprits. Many of these changes result from the drive to reduce subsidy to t the investigation into the the railways in the run-up to

Rail privatisation has also hindered anti-crime initiatives by the railway have led to an in-ase in crime and a worse ent and uncoordinated parts of the rail industry are involved. Mr Winship says: "Rail privatisation will undoubtedly impact on joint initiatives ... Under the new privatised structure, there is evidence of increasing parochialism as railway businesses, understandably. look for more localised husi-

ness-specific initiatives." Mr Winship also suggests that rail privatisation may be distorting the priorities of the police. He commends the BTP for its effective marketing, but says that while "the needs of the railway businesses understandably feature prominently in the Force priorities", the BTP needs to pay more attention to the needs of the public, both travelling and local.

Railtrack came under fire today for telling its own staff not to travel by rail to business meetings. The 10,000-strong workforce

will be urged from tomorrow to use other means of transport instead, including private cars.
Staff will also lose travel

passes which have been issued by British Rail for years before the controversial privatisation of the industry.

The Rail Maritime and Transport Union described the cost saving measure as "bizarre" and said it will be pressing for urgent talks with the company which owns the UK's rail stations as well as tracks and signalling.

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solution with just the right degree of elasticity. Only then did they apply this solution, a composita of styrene, butadiene and isoprene, over the entire windscreen. Less than 0.01 millimetre thick, it is completely invisible

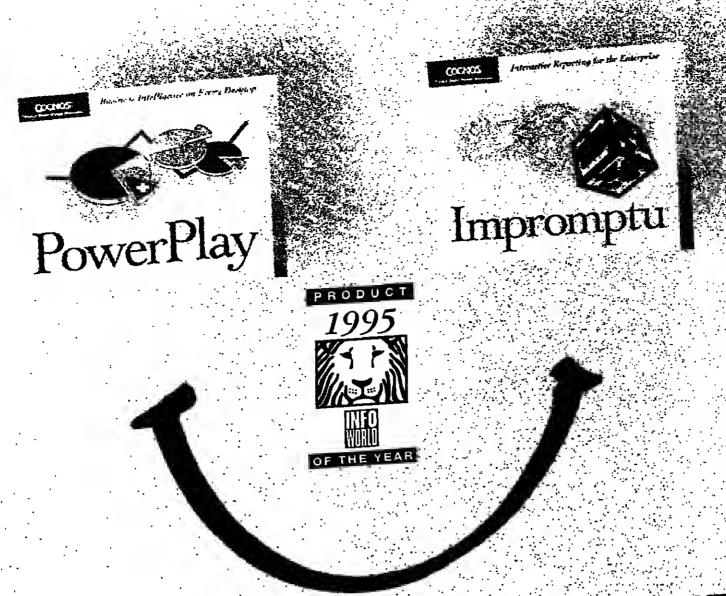
So successful has it proved that, even at high speeds, insects literally bounce off.

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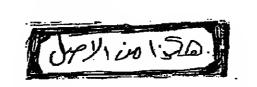
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25.7

Figulation alert: Outgoing rivers' authority chief warns that secrecy will lead to loss of public confidence in watchdog's brief

ears for role of new environment agency

NIOLAS SCHOON Erpnment Correspondent

repowerful new Environ-Agency comes into being to with a grim warning of pit-faahead from the chairman oe largest of its predecessor

he Government's freeding agency will be one of largest organisations of its d in the world, employing 00 staff with a budget of just er £500m a year, much of it sed from charges on indus-, commerce and anglers. Lord Crickhowell, outgoing airman of the now-deceased tional Rivers Authority RA), has warned ministers the new organisation may too secretive and that its top magement are likely to be se-

ely over-stretched

The new agency covering Ed Gallagher, who held the England and Wales is run by a Ed Gallagher, who held the Same post at the NRA. NRA's voice had been stifled in the past because the information for statutory board of part time non-executive directors and eight full time executives. It takes over the role, staff and funding of the NRA, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Pollution and the waste disposal regulators of more than 80 county and district councils. A similar body is being established in Scotland.

The new agency has the task of regulating polluters and waste dumpers, along with the nuclear industry, managing rivers and protecting against coastal and riverine flooding, as well as being the Government's key environmental adviser.

It will be chaired by Lord De Ramsey, a former director of the Country Landowners' Association. The chief executive is

Lord Crickhowell said the agency must be independent of government and offer as much of its opinion as possible in publie. His awkward advice comes in a "valedictory report".

Mr Gallagher has argued that the NRA's influence with government was hlunted by being too independent from Whitehall, But Lord Crickhowell said if too much of the new agency's advice was given behind the scenes it "would quickly lose the public respect and support that has been such an important part of our (the NRA's) success".

He says it is important for the agency to take a full part in the debate about the costs to industry and the public of improving the environment. The

in the past because the infor-mation was "price sensitive" for water companies.

Lord Crickhowell said management needed far more freedom than the Government seemed likely to grant to set up a unified pay and benefits system for its staff. Whitehall and ministerial intervention *constituted a huge obstacle to sensible management". He also reminds ministers

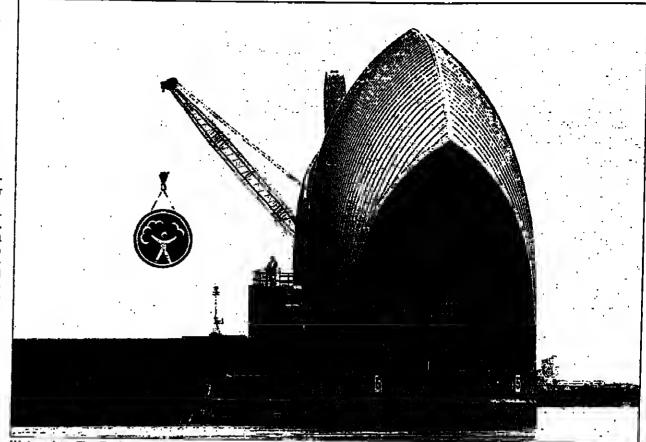
that the agency's non-executive directors will have to take far more decisions on finance and policy matters than they would in a private company. "I'm not at all sure that ministers, civil servants or those invited to serve 'on the board' all fully understand the scale and seriousness of the problem that this

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tisolated West Cumbrian

of Maryport. mmunity leaders are lookfor investors to make the d name a reality and many de skilled food production ders are ready to invest severance pay.

mid a national outery, the Arican soup company (pbell announced last year tall 123 employees were to tade redundant from the lodomepride factory, one of tirea's largest employers. hen the US multi-nationaught the profitable plant in tummer from British com-Dalgety, employees were

red that new investment was inent and that jobs were safe. whether te were to be job s, managers aned with a cate-"no". Eleven s later, in an awith pockets of

uployment of 25 peent, they anneed that the fry was to close. lant was due to ast Friday. But accusations that managen was keen to avoid the crit-

delare of the media, the cany brought forward the own by two weeks. nagement insists there nothing sinister" about the closure and that their "co-live and loyal" workers tamply fulfilled the proon quota carlier than es-

wever, within hours of st employee leaving, hired began stripping the buildiff equipment, and within the bulk of the machinery isappeared down the Mo e group's plants in more erly locations like Salford ing's Lynn.

le Campbell-Savours, MP orkington, has conducted paign against the closure will this week urge former ers to take industrial tricases against Dalgety. mer owners of the factory, iling to provide adequate mation about the sale. ders in the area say busiras already slumped. Apart a series of "wakes" by reant employees, pubs have seen their business de-Smee the Homepride wn around 200 redunWest Cumbria have been announced, and the town's very

Critics in the area say Camping the business going. They allege the company was only in-terested in the Homepride brand name and in destroying the competition.

The equipment has been removed to ensure that any potenual competitors would need to make a substantial investment to enter the market, say the company's former workers.

Anger over the shutdown is not confined to Cumbria. An early day motion in the Com-mons critical of the closure was signed by 340 MPs - one of the highest totals ever. More importantly, 48 of the signatories were Conservatives, including six former ministers.

Campbell insists that it was unaware of all the significant financial facts when it bought the

In a letter to MPs, Bill Mus-toe, the group's UK managing director, argued that the plant suffered from significantly higher cost

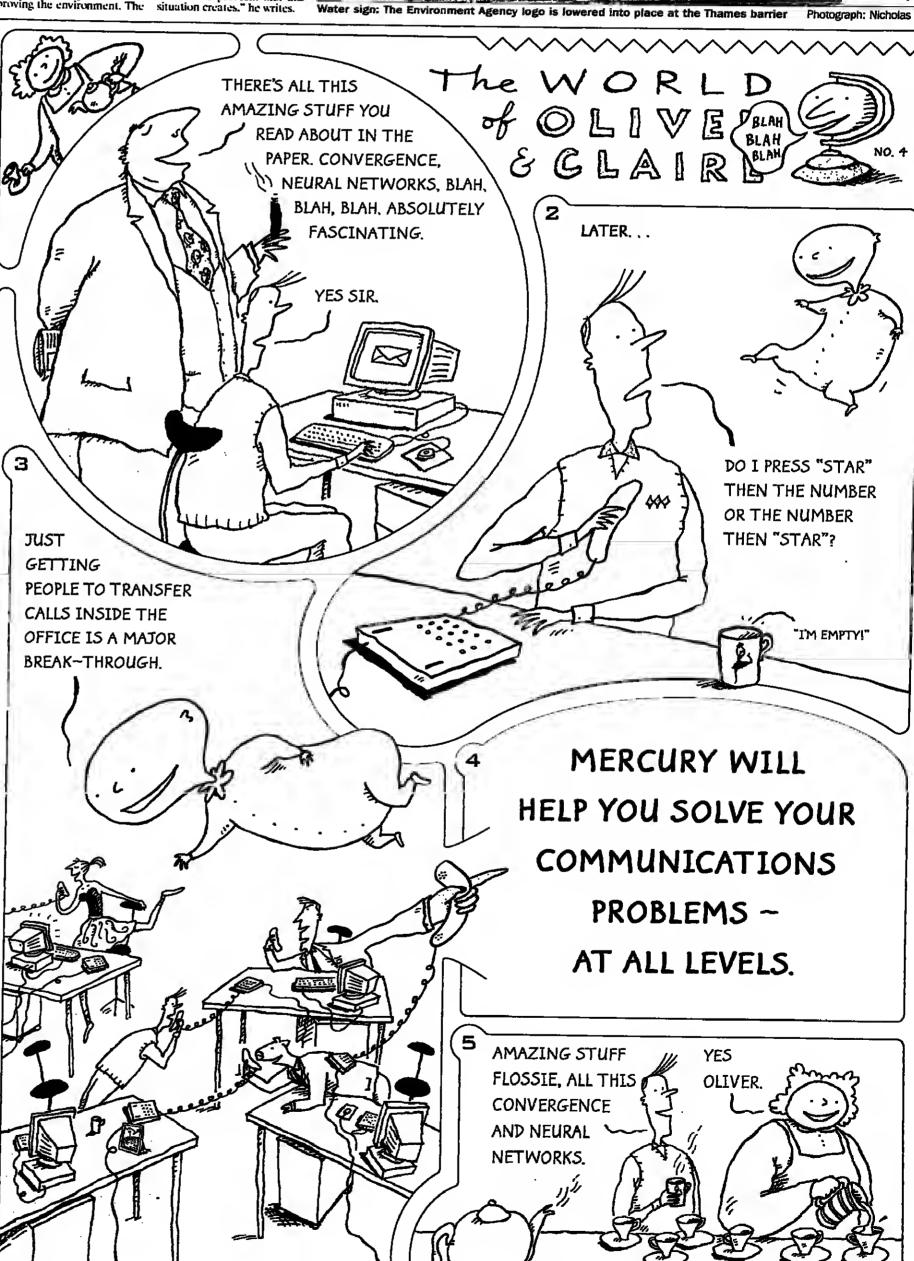
than the company's four other British plants. Only a fifth of the production capacity was in use, overheads were at least 50 per cent cent higher than isewhere, and the brand had lost more

than a third of market share in the past four years. Former employees argue, however, that Campbell knew all the figures before it bought it. Confidential internal fig-ures, obtained by Mr Campbell-Savours, state that the plant was making profits of £4m on sales

George Thompson, 52, a for-mer shop sleward at the factory, believes his working life is probably finished. "It's through no fault of our own," he said. There has never been a strike here and we were making them a decent profit."

Brian Dixon, a full-time of-ficial with the GMB general union in the area, was with Mr Thompson when Campbell's managers gave assurances over the future of the plant. "I felt a deep sense of betrayal. I felt that they had raped the town. They gave me their personal as-surances and I took them at face value. I told my members that they shouldn't worry and they felt a huge feeling of relief.

"In some ways I feel as though I have personally betrayed these workers. I feel sad and sickened that I have been used and misled. I've never felt like it in 19 years as a union official and I never want to feel like it again.



Council refuses to name 'abuse victims'

JASON BENNETTO Crime Correspondent

Charities who are trying to help mentally handicapped people reported to be suffering severe post traumatic stress from sexnames of those affected because disclose information on past and present residents at two private

One charitable organisation received traumatised former residents from homes in Buckinghamshire as recently as this month even though the alleged ahuse ended three years ago. Buckinghamshire County Council said yesterday that the details are confidential and that local authorities and carers bad been informed of the allegations individually. They have also denied allegations that they are withbolding information because they are

concerned about being sued by former residents. News of the continued effects

nf the abuse - described by experts as some of the worst cases of post traumatic stress they have ever seen - comes a fortual abuse cannot find out the night after the death of the former manager of the homes, who a county council is refusing to is believed to have killed himself. Gordon Rowe, who set up and ran the homes in Stoke Poges, near Slough, for 10 years until 1993, was found dead in a car on 18 March, days after he learnt he was about to be charged with ill-treating residents. Thirteen people accused him of 40 assaults.

Police had investigated allegations that mentally handicapped adults were raped beaten and humiliated. A confidential council report concluded that residents were "continually subjected to a cathumiliating and torment".

homes - only one of which is now operating - to remain open on the condition that new management was introduced. The operating company, Longcare Ltd, is now run by Rowe's son Nigel and a family friend, Ray Craddock, who took over in 1993.

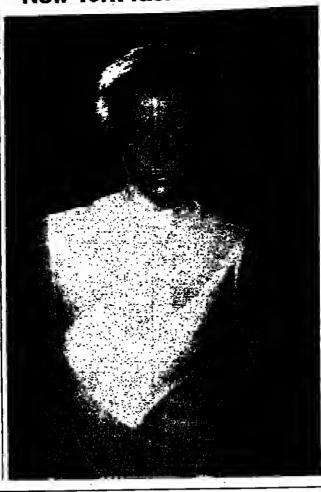
There is no suggestion that the present management was re-sponsible for the reported cases of abuse.

About a dozen of the pre-1993 residents, aged from their teens to mid-forties, have since been sent to Respond, a char-ity which provides psychotherapy to victims of sexual ahuse with learning disabilities. The former residents are still suffering from a range of post trau-matic stress symptoms including self-mutilation, inappropriate sexual behaviour, smearing faeces on walls, and aggression. A spokesman for Bucking-

The council allowed the ham County Council said the decision to withhold names was entirely a matter of good practice, not money. He said: The homes are privately run. Details of residents are a matter for the placing local authorities or other relevant parties and the proprietors. It would oot be proper for the county council to release information about people placed by other authorities and

> Grant Wetherall, a social worker at Ealing Mencap, a charity for people with learning disabilities, which has also treated former residents suffering from trauma, added: "Buckinghamshire have allowed a home to continue to remain npen when there has been horrific abuse. We believe that even though there is new management there are still residents who are suffering psychological damage from treatment under

New York fashion: London designers outshine Italian rivis





Best of British: Evening wear designs by Ghosting

Spectre raise of Brit invasion

TAMSIN BLANCHARD Fashion Editor

Tanya Sarne, of the British lahel Ghost, showed her au-tumn/winter '96 collection at a disused bank in New York's Union Square on Saturday night as American interest in British labels continued to rise.

This is the third season she has shown in New York. Although there were other European labels showing, including the Italians Versus, Gianfranco Ferre and Miu Miu, Ms Sarne was joined by her fellow Briton, Alexander McQueen, and it was the British contingent that

attracted the most attention. There is a general excitement here about all things British, be it Blur and Pulp, designers or British models. One New York columnist could hardly contain her excitement about the prospect of interviewing Mr McQueen after the Ghost show,

saying: "I worship him!"

By showing in America, designers can raise their profile and saleability. Ghost has been able to expand on an already solid US market. As one buyer from a store in Denver pointed out, Ghost is popular with American working women be-

cause it is modern and / as well as appealing to the slus woman who is bigger thatize 10. And the label's succhas grown at home too - rty now devotes more floonce to Ghost than to almost ather designer in its store in ent

Street in central Londo For the new collections Same used heavy stretchrics to make bright white ics, flared trousers and longoded kaftans that looked lihey were inspired by the cones from Star Wars and Batar Galactica. She also usedrey fleeced fahric and quiltecin. For evening wear, therere bias-cut 1930s shift dressith contrasting fabrics curvind

zig-zagging around the ly. signers showing in Newrk have presented collectionat are hased around a simisilhouette - a long narrowket and trousers that clinnd flare at the ankle. Thereery little new thought or cruity involved. What Ghost wed was the midway line hat clothes can have a stronentity as well as being thoghly wearable without los the momentum and creativ hat drives fashion forward.

informative:

With effect from 1 May 1996 the following rates will apply:

Mortgage Rate (for mortgages taken out after 12 March 1995 with

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All loan amounts 6.95% pa 6.69%

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pitals face pot cuts in the GPs

Vtchdog tells drinks maker to replace 'divisive' advertisements after objections over potential harm to disfigured children

artini beauty parade ruled 'hurtful'

romen's year - david fielden ; arnet sunglasses - bouble overhead

JEWELLERY - ERICKSON SEAMON ; COSTUME DESIGN - SARA SEONSTEIN

MAINE MACDONALD
Medorrespondent

MONDAY I A

latian riv

Thenks maker Martini was toldday that its advertisemericaturing ugly people whead supposedly had to havesmetic surgery to make the cautiful enough to drink the ohol were offensive to distred children.

ruling from the Indepenat Television Commisidollowed 70 complaints frollewers, including a plastickeon, who argued that the twidvertisements on the the of "beautiful people"

tirst showed a young man tarassed to drink Martini use he felt he was too ugly. after undergoing cosmetic sery, he could confidently er the drink.

he second featured a quiz , Get a New Face, in which winners were given cosmetic ery "so they look good ugh to drink the beautiful

we can make Britain a more beautiful place."

But the complainants - who also included a neurophysiologist and two charities objected to the emphasis on corrective surgery as hunful to penple with facial disfigurements.

oth commercials ended concern about the effect on the slogan: With Martini, lacially disfigured children, and Some expressed particular

a number said that it was divi-sive to imply that only beauti-ful people could drink Martini.

The advertising agency in-volved, Howell Henry Chaldecott Lury, said that the advert was intended to satirise vanity and to ridicule people who strived for physical perfection by the use of surgery. No one in the commercials

was distigured and the quiz show contestants were of normal people of average annearance.

In its ruling the ITC said that. while recognising many viewers might dislike the advert, it would be "excessive" to conclude that the humour went beyond acceptable standards

However, the heavy empha-

sis on cosmetic surgery was upsetting some sections of the audience. It was particularly concerned about "possible im-pact on facially distigured chil-

dren who would not necessarily

have the maturity to interpret

the material in the relatively sophisticated way intended". It has forbidden Martini to run the adverts before the 9pm

watershed and has "urged" the drinks maker to replace the ematical hasis for increasing the campaign as soon as possible

with more sensitive material. In the same set of rulings the ITC also instructed Teletext to stop advertising premium-rate telephone lines which offered advice on choosing winning

lottery numbers. The telephone services either

In your face: Scenes from the advertisements, which feature ugly people supposedly given cosmetic surgery to make them 'beautiful enough' to drink Martini numbers or claimed a math-

> chances of a win.
> The ITC ruled that no number was statistically more likely to come up than unother. It did not accept Teletext's argument that putting the suggestions in an astrological context made them acceptable.

Help for pigeon fanciers

A investigation has begun into pigeon fancier's lung – a severely debilitating condition that affects

one in 10 aficionados. The medical school at Newcastle upon Tyne university hopes to improve the diagnosis of the condition, a type of allergy to dust in the lofts housing the hirds, and possibly to identify enthusiasts who are vulnerable. Dr Chris Baldwin of the university's immunology department, said: "We have identified a particular type of antibody that is much more likely to occur in those people who have the disease ... The team is now investigating why some people make this type of antibody while others don't."

The research is being support-ed by the North East England Pigeon Fanciers association. A spokesman said: "Pigeon racing is an obsessional hobby and it is something of a personal disaster when a fancier has to give up because of this condition. Anything that can help detect this disease in its early stages is most welcome."

di ii ag wi er the ang cone cone

Hospitals face budget cuts in witch to GPs

C# BROWN Cipolitical Correspondent

Heal budgets could be cut to for more operations per-foil in local surgeries in lablich could change the

fact family doctor services. transfer of resources frepospitals to GPs has emd as one of the leading deals from family doctors in a ming exercise being heminister, to pave the way forchanges.

Ever, there could be a rover the loss of funds by boss, as the resources are grafy switched to GPs. Malone has also heard

clair GPs that hospitals are alreovercharging GPs for servin the "internal market"



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Sten Dorrell: Wants to exp fundholding

to densate for the loss of resouto GPs. roposals will be put for-

wara Green Paper expected & May. Stephen Dorrell, therretary of State for He believes GP fundholdingproved so successful that theefits should be built on. ill of fundholders pub-lishoday shows that 40 per ceromplained about the

cha being increased after the dgets were set. pan of total fundholding

from a few pilot schemes, un-der which GPs would control the whole of the hudget for their patients, including resources

which normally go to hospitals. Many GPs are reluctant to take on extra work, because they feel they are overloaded.
The Government is prepar-

ing to offer GPs more money after the general election. As private contractors to the NHS. they are seen by Tory strategists corled by Gerry Malone, the as important opinion formers. The expansion of primary

care is also being used by the Tories to put pressure on Harriet Harman, Labour's health spokeswoman, over her party's plans to replace fundholding with joint commissioning. The National Association of

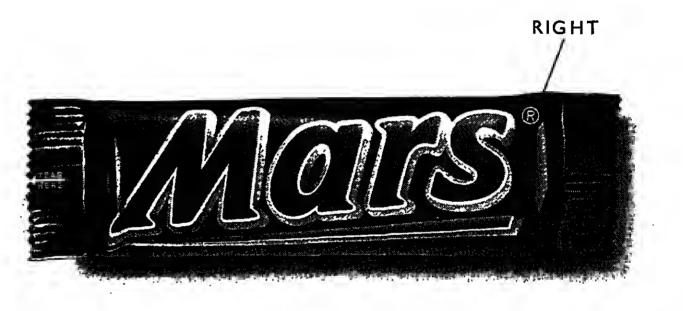
Fundbolding Practices issued a poll to coincide with the launch of another wave of fundholding practices today taking the total to 13,000. The poll was used to not want to be replaced by joint commissioning - in which all GPs co-operate to "buy" services from hospitals.

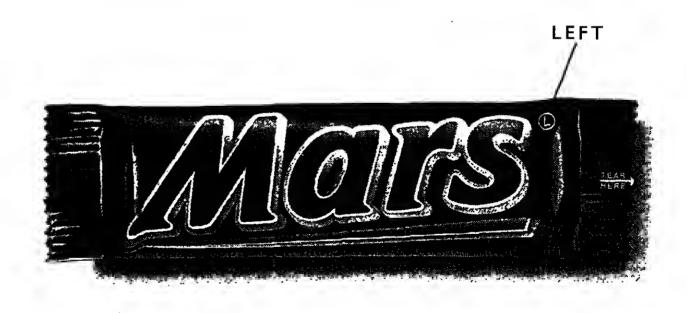
GPs could be given the funds. now given to hospitals, for routine operations, such as bone setting. That could relieve the pressure on accident and emergency units, but it could lead to more mergers, or closures. The Prime Minister signalled

the changes could go further by allowing GPs to take over cottage hospitals. The aim is to creatc "hospitals without walls" in the community, in which operations can be carried out to avoid patients spending long

terms in general hospitals. The British Medical Association, meanwhile, is concerned that the drive by ministers to expand the role of GPs will undermine their commitment to generalised provision of service.

The National Asthma Campaign has called for an overhaul of the discount system for prescriptions after warning that many who suffer from the condition cannot afford the new porrell is studying an exprescription charge of £5.50 per item.





Gravity device robes universe

Sch scientists have begun won one of the most sensitiventific instruments ever buse delicate it could measuffly stretching its legs on a it in another solar system. German colleagues

thre building the giant stere at a fruit farm near Her and in 1999 it will begiving into the mysteries of the verse. The struckmre "gravitational waves". wwwere predicted by Einstart whose existence could ow only be suspected as g could measure them. waves are faint ripples of , reaching earth millions ars after events like ing stars or the appear-t black holes. The structhat will measure the s is formed from two steel tubular arms, 00 metres long and set at

nglesto each other. contains an almostvacuum, in which the s most perfect mirrors will e laser light up and down igh of the tubes ssor James Hough, of

Glasgow University's department of physics and astronomy, said the arrival of a gravitational wave should alter the length of each tube by a fraction of the diameter of the nucleus of a single atom. This will be measured with the latest laser and optics technology, using techniques pioneered in Glasgow, where a

prototype was built. The University of Wales in Cardiff will be involved in analysing the data. The British team will also be working with German colleagues from the University of Hanover, the Alhert Einstein Institute in Potsdam and the Max Planck Institute at Garching.

Britain's contribution to the £7m project includes a £1m grant from the governmentfunded Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council.

Four more structures are to he built, including an American one which will have arms 4km long, but the Hanover device so sensitive that it should be able to detect waves from 45 million light years away - will be the first in operation.

At last, the left-handed Mars bar.

You spoke and we listened.

A sizeable part of our bulging mailbag at Mars has recently complained about the TEAR HERE' perforation being at the wrong end of the Mars bar for our valued left-handed customers.

Many are opening the bar at the wrong end and

eating the Mars bar against the chocolate flow on the bar surface. And this, naturally enough, can impair that unique and delicious Mars taste.

So we did something about it.

From today, all Mars bar wrappers will now feature either the handy, at-a-glance symbol ® for right-handed bars (see diagram), or the symbol () for left-handed bars.

It's a small service to our customers but in this fast moving, faceless world of ours, isn't it nice to know that someone's lending a hand?

A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play,



Sheep in Wales still affected by Chernoby

ROGER DOBSON and JOJO MOYES

Hundreds of Welsh sheep are still failing radioactivity tests a decade after the Chemobyl dis-aster, it emerged yesterday, following claims that the nuclear accident in the former Soviet Union may also be responsible for a sharp rise in cancers on a Scottish island.

Ten years on from the Ukrainian nuclear power station disaster, sheep on more than 200 square miles of north Wales and 13 farms in Cumbria are still subject to controls and testing which were originally expected only to last a matter of months. Around 400 farms with 220,000 sheep are subject to

Photograph: Tom Kidd

1986. Latest figures show that 672 sheep failed the monitoring test and that the highest radioactivity level is still over half the peak of 1987.

Monitoring is compulsory for all animals leaving the restricted areas and sheep which leave after failing a test are marked with apricot, green or bine paint. Radioactivity levels fall when the sheep leave the restricted area and buyers of marked sheep can have them re-monitored.

Huw Jones, of the Farmers' Union of Wales, said: "The controls were really not expected to last so long, just a very short time. But they have continued and farmers have got used to them. They get £1:30 compensation for each scan carried out, and they have learned to live with it.

He added: There is no doubt that the controls helped to protect Welsh lamb against big losses in sales and people do have confidence in lamb. Some sheep are still failing the test, but it is a relatively small number."

At the peak in 1987, nearly 23,000 sheep in Wales failed the radioactivity test.

The news came as doctors on Benbecula in the Outer Hebrides called for an urgent investigation into why the number of radioactivity. The ractive of cancers there has tripled in cloud passed over is of the last 18 months. They believe Britain just over a weater.

controls introduced in June the sharp increase mbe the result of the island's pulation eating vegetables, seind and meat contaminated balout.

The cancers being wrted are largely of the digesteract. with some lung tumou.

The Western Isles lalth Board has said it will invegate the rise in cases, and theovernment yesterday offel to support any inquiry. Birot-land's chief medical offi, Dr Robert Kendell, said was exceedingly unlikely hat Chemobyl was responsitand he cited the following rons: ■ The radioactive plun om Chernobyl spread over ions of square miles, and regless of local rainfall differes, it could never have "selvely contaminated" so small area so far away.

■ Radioactive fallout not cause cancers of the drive tract in isolation. It inly caused thyroid cano and leukaemias

■ As Chernobyl happed in 1986, cancers related trould be spread over many is, as happened with thyroidcers in the Ukraine.

The explosion at Cloby happened on 26 At 1986 and released 150 milliuries

Crossbill face unique tests

ROS WYNNE-JONES

The Scottish crossbill, at present undergoing genetic testing to determine whether it is a separate species, may be the only bird unique to British shores.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds is funding DNA testing to clear up doubts over the birds taxonomic status. If it turns out to be a different species to the common crossbill then it is the UK's only endemic

Like the common crossbill, the Scottish bird takes its name from its unusual beak, which is specially developed to extract seeds from pine cones in its coniferous habitat.

Only fragments of the ancient Caledonian pine forests remain and the Scottish crossbill appears to be dwindling with them, which is why it appears on a list of 116 endangered animal and plant species which are having rescue plans designed for them. There are estimated to be only 1,500 adults in Britain. The plans are being drawn up

Scottish crossbill: At risk

Heritage of the wild

by the biodiversiteering group, a committee overnment scientists, temics, wildlife conservationarities and civil servants.

"We don't knowput the Scottish crossbill's momic status yet, but in thentime we are giving the bite beafor the RSPB said.

The crossbill famil have cles that power the l' strong jaws, and the Scottrossbill has even been know use its beak to swing frewig to twig. While the com crossbill is smaller, RSPB spokesman said, "Sch crossbills are amazingly :. They are acrobatic feedend they occasionally do a tze job.

using their beaks."
The red grouse wice considered a species que to Britain, but it has a been found to be a sub-sps of the willow grouse foundcandi-navia. "The Scottishsbill is our last hope for a of our

own," the RSPB sai The steering grouproposing to promote the ection, creation and managent of native pinewoods aronitor sites frequented bottish crossbills, while the wo clarify the taxonomic stof the bird continues.

DAILY POEM

Midshipman

By Gary Geddes

She had a small anchor, not much larger than a wasp, tattooed on her wrist before I left on the first troop ship.

I was in the crow's nest with a bosun's pipe when we hoisted the aftersheets. I could see her on the rocks of the Eggerton Head promontory waving, holding up her anchor, and listening for the three short blasts I'd promised to make.

1 suppose we were lovers, though without the usual haste and burning. I'd touch her naked breasts and she was not ashamed to admit her curiosity. We talked, collected shells at Eggerton Head, and thought an earlobe worth an afternoon.

Drowning wasn't half so bad and I carried that tiny anchor with me to my grave.

Gary Geddes is one of Canada's best-known poets. boetic interests include the archaeological; his sequenthe Terracotta Army - a series of dramatic monologues inch the imagined speakers are clay soldiers from China of trd century BC, published in 1984 – won the Commonwealoetry Competition. It appears with this poem, the eight a sequence called Girl by the Water in Active Trading: Seed Poems 1970-1995 published this month by Peterloo Po



We aren't trying to make a faal of you. This isn't a product of our imagination, it's a product of the Valkswagen plant in Wolfsburg.

The Horlequin, os it's colled, started life as a cor show gimmick to indicate the

colours ovailable. Of course, the orders floaded in. We dutifully started producing the multi-

calaured movericks, each with a calaurful array of features.

Among them, a driver's airbag, engine immobiliser, height-adjustable steering column and electric, heated door mirrors.

Since bowing to public pressure, however, we haven't had a mament's peace. You demanded a Palo with a bigger sunroof. You got the 'Open Air'.

You insisted an a boat. You're getting the Polo Saloon.

Sa please, we've done everything you asked of us, naw give us a break.

There are thirty-eight different madels in a range storting at £7,760. One of them

must be right. We've even mode one that runs on rabbit droppings.

The Polo Harlequin.

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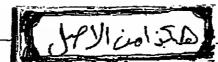
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TO SHOULD VE



hand: The Faberge clock given to Alexander III being auctioned by Christie's bergé face worth a fortune

MANE MACDONALD Artsespondent

worlich can be expected to sell Im at auction. This is oneem - and Christic's is to an it later this month.

Txiraordinary piece, wro in silver by Carl Fabwas given to Alexander Russia in 1891 to commene his 25th wedding annicy to the Empress Marjodorovna, and the 10th iversary of their

TOOPERATIVE BANK

ily and is Faberge's most important silver commission -Three few clocks in the and one of the largest of his works of art - which remains in

> Standing 27in high, the clock is shaped in the form of a baroque monument. Its base features a Romanov griffin holding the imperial Russian arms in his right talons and the royal arms of Denmark - the home country of the empress -

Around the diamond studded roh. clock face swarm 25 figures, one works of art, paintings and for each year of the marriage, Fabergé at Christic's New York.

members of the imperial fam- and the piece is armounted by a triple-crowner Russian imperial double-leaded eagle holding a laurel vreath.

Fahergé is known to have employed several ousiders to create the work. A cort architect called Benois dit the design. and the sculptor subert made a wax model. The total cost wa 18,585 rou-

bles - an immense briune at the

But it should sei for another on 18 April, whin it will be the star lot in a sale of Russian

Classroom unions: Conference season opens with members calling for action against attacks on profession National Union of Membership: 189,293

Who they are: Teachers and some heads, mainly from printary schools. More left wingers then other unions. Key bruses. Angry about eague tables: furious about the naming of

weak teachers by inspectors. Witency: Most religants ire in the NUT but fis. eadership is trying to celm them. Conference will hear numerous calls from for industrial action, not east over testing.

National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers Membership: 146,266 Who they are: Classroom teachers. The union claim to recruit more than half of all newly qualified

Key issues: Pay and conditions, violence against teachers, espections. tancy: Not afraid

to take action. Won a spectacular court victory during the 1993 boycot of testing, which led to climb-down by the

Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary

Association of Teachers and Lecturers Membership: 140,616 Who they are: Membership

comes largely from secondary schools and independent schools and from further education. Key Issues: Disruptive pupils, school inspections, testing and the national cumculum.

Militancy: Increasing association's conference will discuss affination to the Trades Union Congress.

Peter Smith.

general secretary

Traditionally moderate, the

of Schoolmasters/

Professional Association of Teachers Membership: 40,036 Who they are: Many are

former members of . National Union of Teachers and National Association Union of Women Teachers who defected during the strikes of the Eighties. Key Issues: Negative fects of television and video games, nursery

education -- has special section for nursery nurses. Militancy: Non-striking union established by two teachers who were rigered by the effects of

National Association of Head Teachers. Membership: 32.000 Who they are: About two-thirds are primary heads and deputies. the rest are secondary, nursery and special schools.

Key lasues: Funding. testing - particularly of 11-year-olds - and nursery vouchers. Militancy: Increasing Headteachers may refuse to take action against staff who boycott tests for 11-year-olds.

Association Membership: 8,650 Who they are: heads and deputies at secondaries. Key issues: Role of local authorities, funding, 16-19 review by Ron Dearing, government's chief adviser on the national cumculum. Militaricy: Almost none. Only known incidence

Secondary Heads

was a half-day strike in Manchester more than a decade ago in support of a victimised



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ap-na-

David Hart.

Angry teachers threaten to boycott inspections

John Andrews.

JUDITH JUDD and FRAN ABRAMS

Teacher unions will call for non-co-operation with school inspections at their Easter conferences, which start today. The move could mean staff refusing to talk to inspectors or to teach while they are in the classroom.

Angered by what they see as increasingly political statements by Chris Woodhead, the chief inspector of schools, and by the Prime Minister's decision that bad teachers should be named, union members will also call for the abolition of the inspection service.

All the three main classroom unions will meet in the next fortnight amid fears of a repetition of last year's conference season, when Labour's education spokesman, David Blunkett,

bers of the National Union of Teachers, Gillian Shepbard will speak at the conferences, the first Secretary of State to visit the National Union of Teachers'

gathering for 16 years. The Secondary Heads Association meets at the end of April and the National Association of Head Teachers at the

end of May.

All the classroom unions say that their members are furious about punitive new inspections set up by the Government. From next Monday, inspectors will mark all teachers on a scale of one to seven and report those scoring six and seven to their beadteachers.

The two biggest unions, the NUT and the National Association of Schoolmasters/Union of Women Teachers (NAS-UWT), will both hear calls for

members to break the law by refusing to work with the schools inspectors.

Doug McAvoy, the NUT's general secretary, said: "There will be support for nonco-operation with inspections. You can't expect teachers not to be irate about them and the way in which the chief inspector bas gone out of his way to promote

attacks on teachers." At the Association of Teachers and Lecturers' conference. which begins today in Torquay, Devon, there will be condemnation of the chief inspector and calls for the inspection body, Ofsted, to be scrapped.

The NUT conference will also debate a motion to ballot primary-school teachers on a test boycott which could bring disruption to classrooms during next term's national tests for 600,000 11-year-olds. Mrs Shep- that schools invest in surveil-

hard announced the new league tables last month, only days afintruders. ter saving that there would be no tables for 11-year-olds this

Mr McAvoy said: "There will be a lot of support for boycotting the 11-year-old tests in protest against league tables. We sbould have to ponder what support might be forthcoming for a boycott beyond the floor of the conference."

Violence against teachers and false allegations of abuse by pupils will also be high on the agenda. The Association of Teachers and Lecturers will publish a survey of 71 local authorities showing increasing

discipline problems. In the wake of of the massacre at the primary school in Dunblane last month it will call for new laws to ensure lance systems to protect against

ATL members will also call for ministers to introduce new investigative procedures to protect teachers against malicious allegations of abuse by pupils. Teachers say that these accusations, often perpetrated by pupils who have been disciplined for a misdemeanour, are becoming increasingly common.

At the NASUWT conference, delegates will call for the disciplining of parents who encourage disruptive children to misbehave. Nigel de Gruchy, the union's general secretary, said that he would rather see children on the streets stealing cars than in school disrupting

"It is better to wreck a car than to wreck a class if that's the

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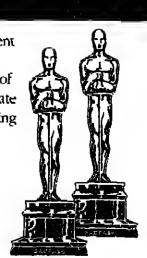
The two Oscars won by BBC Television programmes on March 25 represent the highest possible international recognition for excellence.

We're proud to be associated with such talents as Nick Park - creator of Wallace and Gromit - and documentary maker Jon Blair. And to celebrate their achievements, BBC viewers can see both these Academy Award-winning films again this weekend.

A Close Shave: BBC1 Good Friday at 6.40pm. Best Animated Short Film: An Aardman Animations production in association with BBC Bristol and BBC Children's International.

Anne Frank Remembered: BBC2 Easter Monday at 7.00pm. Best Documentary Feature: A Jon Blair Film in association with BBC Television and the Disney Channel.





Chechen peace bid: Kremlin offers to stop combat operations, pull out troops and talk with separatist leader

Yeltsin makes TV pledge to end bloodshed

HELEN WOMACK

Boris Yeltsin appeared on national television last night to reveal a plan for ending the war in Chechnya, which he has admitted is likely to make or break his chances of being reelected as Russian President in June. The plan promised a halt to combat operations in the Caucasian region and the par-tial withdrawal of troops. It also held out the possibility of indirect talks with the Chechen separatist leader. General Dzhokar Dudayev.

It remains to be seen how effective the plan will bc. given that Moscow's forces were bombing Chechen villages up to the last minute before Mr Yettsin spoke, and in view of the fact that no consultations were held with General Dudayev, who still considers that he is at war with Russia.

The commander of Russian forces in Chechnya, General Vyacheslav Tikhomirov, said after the broadcast that he hoped Russians understood it would be impossible to end all fighting immediately.

Mr Yeltsin admitted that

"the Chechen crisis is Russia's higgest problem". To solve it, he had ordered an end to combat operations from 31 March and a stage-hy-stage withdrawal of federal forces from the quiet regions of Chechnya to its administrative borders.

The military actions have helped create the necessary preconditions for a radical change in the situation," he said, in reference to the Russian nulitary campaign.

Last week, the Defence Minister, Pavel Grachev, said that over 100 Chechen villages had after they handed over their weapons to the Russian army, in exchange for security guarantees. Western reporters said the peace deals were often reached under duress.

Mr Yeltsin said efforts to "extend zones of conciliation" would continue, but added: "Of course, we will not tolerate terrorist actions. Responses to them will be adequate."

General Dudayev's Muslim fighters have heen mostly pushed back into the southern mountains as a result of Russia's military offensive. The Kremlin incumbent must hope that none of them re-emerges to stage embarrassing pre-election raids of the kind that were made over the last year on hospitals in southern Russia.

President Yeltsin acknowledged military measures would not achieve a settlement of the Chechen conflict. "That is why the second task is to prepare and stage free democratic elections to a republican legislature," he said.

The Chechens have a bitter experience of "free" elections organised by Russian. Last December they were offered only one candidate, Doku Zavgayev, in a poll for a regional leader that was reminiscent of Brezhnev-era "democracy". This time, President Yeltsin

envisages a "political peace forum" composed of representatives from Chechen regions will help prepare the elections. "The election of a new parliament will become a major

step in recreating the bodies of state power in the Checheo republic," Mr Yeltsin said. "As the system of power in Chechnya strengthens, responsibility and authority to finalise a settlement will shift from the Federation to the head, gov-ernment and parliament of the Chechen republic."

Then the "main stumbling block - the peculiarities of the status of the Chechen republic" could be addressed, he said.

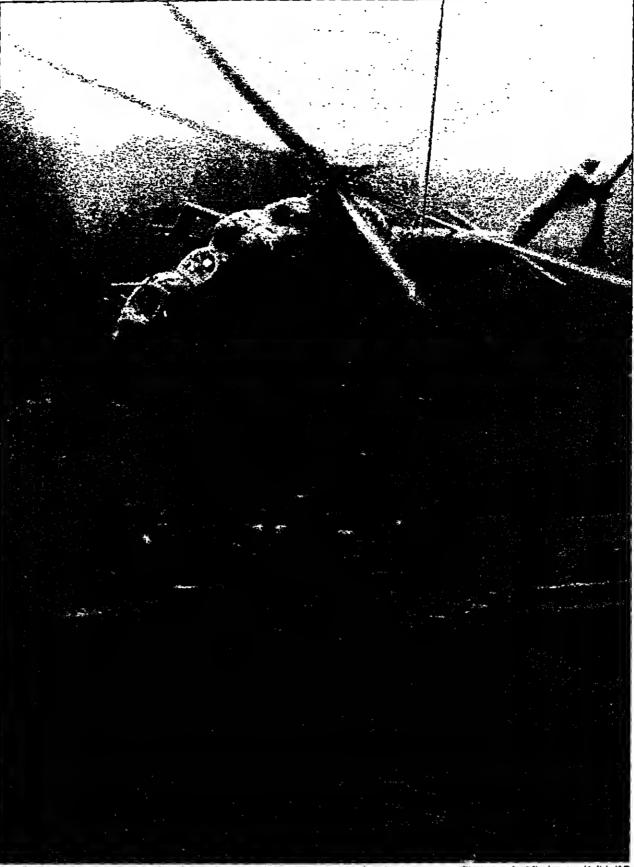
The Chechen separatists insist on full independence. Russia has offered autopomy, while insisting Chechnya must re-main a part of the Russian

Nothing Mr Yeltsin said last night suggested Moscow had pendence. All Mr Yeltsin said was: The main condition under which negotiations on the status of Chechnya could be started is normalising the situation in the republic and establishing peace, calm and stability there. For the sake of that we are ready to enter into negodations, through interme-

diaries, with Dudayev's side." He appointed the Prime Minister Viktor Chemomyrdin, a dove on the Chechen issue, to form a state commission for a settlement in the region.

Peace talks between envoys from Moscow and representatives of General Dudayev last summer produced a ceasefire. But it was violated on both sides as talks on a settlement ran into difficulties, until full-scale war broke out again last autumn, Mr Yeltsin said he would

ask the state Duma to consider an amnesty for Chechen fighters "except those who have committed grave common law crimes", presumably meaning those who took civilian hostages in the raids oo southern Russian hospitals. He promised that humanitarian aid and government funds for reconstruction would be better distributed. "Today they ofteo oever reach



Iron fist: Russian forces were bombing Chechen villages up to the last minute

Human rights group attacks army's excessive use of force

TONY BARBER **Europe Editor**

Human Rights Watch/Helsinki. the New York-based human rights monitoring group, has accused the Russian armed forces of disregarding the safety of civilians in waging their war Chechnya. However, in a report based on a fact-finding mission

to the region last January, the of Pervomayskoye in January Kizlyar. The Human Rights tionate use of force cost the lives However, while criticising the higgest city, where the rebels group also charged the 1996 is only one of the most re
Chechen rebels with violating cent dramatic examples of the local mosque. Magningth of the local mosque, Magningth of the local mosque, Magningth of force the report accused the Russian forces who had taken international humanitarian law by taking civilians hostage and using them as human shields.

"As has been the case throughout this war, the Russian army continues to show toagainst separatist fighters in tal disregard for the safety of the civilian population," the group said. "The shelling of the village

Russian army's systematic violation of humanitarian law during its war in Chechnya."

Russian forces destroyed Pervomayskoye, a village in the republic of Dagestan, after with about 160 hostages, mostly from the nearby town of

Aliyev, as saying the rebels had not killed any villagers.

It added: "Beginning on 15 January, Russian forces pounded Pervomayskoye with artillery helicopter-launched trapping a group of rebeis there shelling for three days and destroyed the village entirely. It appears that this dispropor-

houses throughout the village."

Representatives from Human Rights Watch who visited. Pervomayskoye on 23 January concluded that 10 per cent of all homes had been razed, 45 per cent had been rendered uninhahitable and 40 per cent had suffered significant damage.

Chechia rebels in Kizlyar and Pervodayskoye of committing summiny executions, using a hospital and apartment buildings for military purposes, and holding civilians as human shields.

control in March 1995, Criticising the scale of Russian retaliation, the report said: "The use of indiscriminate and disproportionate force in Gudermes, the village of Shelkovskaya The report also discussed and other villages nearby re-the fishting last December in sulted in massive destruction Gudernes, Chechnya's second and the loss of untold lives."

Bulgria tormy row ver Krenin alliace

ADRIAN BRIDGE Central Europe Copondant

Russia's drive tostore its influence in the fer soviet Union and Easte Europe has sparked a furstow in Bulgaria, tradition me of Moscow's stauncheries.

In an outburst ove weekend, the Bulgarian sideot, Zhelyu Zhelev, suged the country's Socialist gument could be holding st talks with Russia, aimed ringing n back into a Moscod pact.

Mr Zhetev's comes were precipitated by the ing on Friday of an accorrengthening ties between ia and the former Soviet relics of Betarus, Kazakhstad Kyrgyzstan. According ulgarian media reports, tussian President. Boriseltsin, declared after the sig. "The new community pen to other states ... mayb Baltic states or perhaps, fample,

Bulgaria."
Mr Zhelev said leltsin's idea "has never beersidered by official Bulgs state institutions and wever be accepted by the Bran people". At the same the suggested Bulgaria's mment, made up of formommunists, could aireae in cahoots with the Krd.

"I am officialling the government if amidestine talks have beerld with Russia, and if anyeas made commitments bethe backs of the Bulgarian le," said the President.

As a former lent and virulent anti-Conist. Mr Zhelev representaro-Western camp in Bulgshich sees the long-term goahe country as memberst the European Union asto.

Although theernment publicly hacks illar pro-Western stance, Socialist MPs are more pissian and are wary of pre for Nato membership is face of

ener strike her

Moscow's objec Within the fc Commuoist hloc, Bulgzas always considered Mos most loy-al ally. In additiotrong cul-tural and ling ties, the country remainendent on Russia for its e supplies.

With little pet of early atry to Nato c EU. Bulgaria is coming r pressure from Russia tn what it hopes will evdly evolve into a counterfit to the Western-hasedness. The pact signed ben Russia. Belarus, Kazah and Kyrgyzstan foreserong economic ties and mtegradon.

Slovaks protest as their freedoms are whittled awy

Bratislava - Fr Marian Dragun squinted in the sun and delivexed his damning verdict on life in Slovakia, just over three years after it struck out on its

own as an independent country. "As a priest under Communism. I know what tools can be used to prevent people speaking the truth. I saw them applied then, and I see them again

He quickly qualified his state-ment. Had this been 1988, we would not have been having this conversation in broad daylight. in the middle of one of Bratislava's busiest squares.

We were not talking of true totalitarianism. The country still enjoys free elections and an independent judiciary, Although the television and radio are all pro-government, most newspapers are firmly in the hands of the opposition.

New anti-subversion law confirms fears of drift towards totalitarianism, writes Adrian Bridge But like many Slovaks, Fr Dragun still felt uneasy. "We are freet than we were under the

sure to be obedient."
The Catholic Church is not alone in feeling a chill wind in Slovakia since the return to power in late 1994 of Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, the populist former boxer who led the country's split with the

Czech Republic in 1993. Concerned over what it sees as a trend towards intolerant authoritarianism, the Church last week publicly protested against a new anti-subversion law which, in its wording, echoes the legislation passed by the Communists in 1948.

The law, ratified by a stormy session in parliament last Tuesday, was denounced by opposi-Communists, but there are wortion politicians, journalists and rying signals. In the Church we the country's large ethnic Hunare again coming under presgarian minority, who see it as a threat to the freedoms of speech and assembly. Under the law, which is to be

challenged in the constitutional court, jail terms may be imposed on Slovaks found guilty of "disseminating false information abroad damaging to the interests of the republic, or organising public rallies judged to be "subversive".

With no clear definition of the "interests of the republic" or subversion, critics say the law may lead to political trials, or at least to a new atmosphere of fear and self-censorship.

norms and insists it will oot be used on political opponents. But even if the anti-subver-

sion law is not actually enforced, its passage was a classic example of Mr Meciar's blunderbuss approach to politics and of the country's tendency to shoot itself in the foot. Last Tuesday ought to have

heen a day of celebration. After a year of stalling, Slovak MPs finally ratified a landmark treaty of reconciliation with neighbouring Hungary, seen as an essential step in both countries' attempts to join the European Union and Nato.

Instead of basking in rare international praise, however, the government once again found

The government says the itself on the defensive, afterpass-new law is in line with Western ing a law which raised new ing a law which raised new questions about Slovakia's democratic credentials and its suitability for early membership of the EU and Nato.

Western diplomats Bratislava are confused. Late last year, officials from the EU and the United States took the unusual step of issuing diplomatic notes, publicly voicing concern about human rights and democracy in Slovakia.

At the time, Mr Meciar, who heads the Movement for a Democratic Slovakia, was waging a vicious campaign to oust his main rival, President Michal Kovac, and was even suspected of involvement in the bizarre kidnapping of one of the President's sons.

The diplomatic protests fol-loved sharp criticism of the way in which, on his return to power Mr Meciar took control of state broadcasting, privatisa-tion and the intelligence service.

They confirmed a growing proeption that Slovakia was no longer seen as belonging alongde the Czech Republic, oland and Hungary in the first division" of Central Euopean countries seeking to iter Nato and EU.

The aim of the protests was prod Slovakia back into the democratic fold: given its locatioo in the heart of Central Euope it was not in Western interests to alienate it, or force t into the embrace of Moscow, which seeks to revive old ties in

The government, stung by the protests, blamed them on the enemy within" and on "traitors" who had hesmirched the

good name of the country for their own policical advantage. But after toying with the idea of looking east for allies, it reaffirmed a desire to join the Western camp, opened up a more extensive dialogue with its would-be future partners and took some of the venom out of the attacks on Mr Kovac.

Given that stance, the passage of the anti-subversion law - part of a package of controversial new measures instigated by Mr Meciar's far-right Slovak National Party coali-tion partners - comes as a puzzling and disturbing new development.

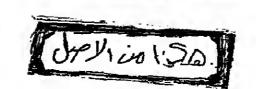
dependence, movaks admit that while economy shows signs of very, their political culture its infancy and that, in eagerness to assert their nal identity after centuricommation by Hungarians aen Czechs, mistakes are beade.

Last month, feciar appealed to the Wit to judge his country too ly, arguing that out of a mi of "igno-rance, stupidity rite", Slovakia sometimes; out what appear like negsignals.

In Bratislava seem to dwell on their co's leaders and the questiff where Slovakia is head

But one passevas enigmatic. "Democri)f course I think we live innocracy. But to think that a live here are two very diffithings.

Wenever accept money iro strangers.



Masters of Ethiopia's Red Terror face trial for genocide

Relatives of Mengistu's countless victims have waited five years to obtain justice, writes David Orr in Addis Ababa

There are few physical reminders in Addis Ababa of the A score of others, including President Mengistu who fled as which ruled Ethiopia from 1974 to 1991: a bust of Marx near the university; a mural of Lenin at the Ministry of Defence; and on the main thoroughfare, the soaring Victory Monument, emblazoned with a hammerand-sickle and crowned with a red star.

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Yet, for those who suffered under the rule of President Mengistu Haile Mariam, the memories of those dark years are all too real. Kebede Ademase and his wife, Bizunesh Demisse, lost three children in the Red Terror of the Seventies, when countless thousands of "counter-revolutionaries" were imprisoned, tortured and

Their 23-year-old son and 18-year-old daughter were denounced and thrown into national observers, they could be a modely for similar prison at the end of 1978. Early the following year they were executed and their hodies dumped in front of a hus garage in the middle of the night. Soon after, another son, aged 21, was detained on his way home from college. After interrogation by the authoriues. he was taken to the lane leading to his parents' bouse and shot in the head.

"I don't know why they were killed", says Mr. Ademase, a retired bospital worker, "They said my daughter wrote a subversive document. But as far as I know they weren't involved in student politics".

After all this time, Mr Ademase and his wife might soon have the satisfaction of seeing justice done. On 4 April, the trial of the Dergue, the military junta which ruled for 17 years after its overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974, is set to resume. Forty-six members of the Dergue ("committee" in the main language spoken. Amharic) will stand in the dock to answer charges of genocide and crimes against humanity.

rebels approached the capital in May 1991, and now lives in Zimhabwe, will he tried in absentia. They face the death penalty if convicted. "It would be wrong to say the judiciary is totally independent", says Tsehai Wada, a lawyer with the Ethiopian

pressure from the politicians to secure convictions. But there is rectly or indirectly in the atrocities committed during the

years, will constitute the most

and complex task", says Girma Wakjira, the state's special prosing with issues completely out-

Zenawi, is receiving considerable international support. Argentina has provided forensic investigators to examine mass graves, the US Bar Association has given legal advice, Sweden has donated computers, and Britain and Holland have

testimonies from survivors and victims' relatives, the special prosecutor has had access to many thousands of detailed documents, including orders for executions, torture and a litany of other crimes.

Human Rights Centre.
"It's under quite a lot of

little doubt that the 46 facing trial have been involved di-Dergue regime". The trials, which could last for

extensive judgement of human rights violations since the Nuremberg trials at the end of the Second World War. If they be used as models for similar actions in Rwanda. "The Dergue trial is a huge

ecutor. "We've got limited staff and resources and we're dealside the previous experience of Ethiopia's legal system".

However, the government of the Prime Minister, Meles

provided financial assistance. In addition to thousands of

"The Red Terror was organised in a very systematic and hureaucratic manner", says



Bitter memories: Kebede Ademase and his wife holding photographs of their three children killed by the Communist regime in the Seventies

"Records were meticulously kept and every last bullet used for executions accounted for. The evidence we present will amaze not only our own people, it will amaze the whole world".

About 1,900 people have been arraigned and it is the intention of the special prosecu-tor that all should stand trial. They have been divided into tention of the special prosecu-

three different categories: the political masters and decisionmakers, among them those whose cases will be beard in April; the "middle management" - some 800 policemen, soldiers and administrators who carried out the day-to-day run-

viduals who are said to have tortured, drowned, strangled and shot thousands of their fellow countrymen.

The most prominent defendants are held at World's End. a prison and former Dergue death centre in the capital. The prisoners, who are about to enter their fifth year of detention, wile away their days in an

octagonal courtyard, reading, learning languages, playing chess and table tennis. They all proclaim their innocence.

"We want the guilty to face what they have done", says Manyahelishal Gisau, chairman of the Anti-Red Terror Committee, which was set up to catalogue the Dergue's atroc-

People have suffered terrihly, people bave heen disabled by torture, parents of victims bave lost their minds. Until the guilty are punished, the survivors cannot he released

from their suffering". No one knows how many people died at the hands of the Dergue. The names of some 54,000 victims have been regis-

tered with the Committee in Addis Abaha hut the real tally could be several times as high. Kebede Ademase and his wife, whose three dead children are on the Committee's files, are even more forthright; the memhers of the Dergue must be given the death penalty, they say. There can be no other justice

Photograph: David Orr

French power struggle: Léotard elected leader of centre-right

Acrimony as Giscard hands over the reins

MARY DEJEVSKÝ

France's former defence minister, Francois Léotard, won one of the most bitter and personal contests of recent French politics yesterday to be elected leader of the country's second largest political group, the Union pour la Democracie

Française (UDF). He succeeds Valery Giscard d'Estaing, who founded the UDF 18 years ago as a parlia-mentary base for his centre-right pro-Europe policy when he was President of France.

Mr Giscard d'Estaing, who is 70, says be is stepping out of the national political limelight to concentrate on his adopted local region, the Auvergne, in central France.

As almost his last act as UDF leader, bowever, and one that summed up the acrimony of the two-month leadership campaign, he used bis valedictory speech to endorse the candidacy of Mr Leotard's chief rival, the aggressive former economy minister. Alain

Mr Madelin, whose popularity with the French public soared after he was sacked from the first government of

Alain Juppe in August, had stood on a platform of change, renewal and modernisation. He toured the country portraying Mr Leotard as the candidate of the status quo and the UDF's mexorable decline.

In his speech at yesterday's election convention, Mr Madelin said: "Today's status quo is, I fear, tomorrow's defeat." Ramming the point home he asked: "How can the French trust the political parties to reform French society when those parties are not capable of reforming themselves?"

Mr Léotard was regarded by his enemies as the candidate of the party apparatus. By bis friends and supporters he was seen as the "legitimate" candi-date who merited the succession and would be able to keep the UDF-a loose federation of diverse political parties, each too small to have influence in its own right - united through a po-tentially difficult period for the

political right. All eyes are on the 1998 parliamentary elections, when the right - Gaullists and UDF alike fear a sharp fall in their massive parliamentary majority, if not its outright loss. Their fears have been exacerbated in recent weeks as the overwhelming maiority of local and parliamentary by-elections bave gone against

One consideration of UDF members was to elect a leader who would minimise the losses in 1998. Mr Madelin sees himself as that leader, and in his upbeat address to delegates vesterday he presented himself as someone who would be able to restore the good name of politicians and politics in the eyes of French voters and maybe return the UDF to its 1978 position as the largest po-

litical grouping on the right.
Public opinion polls among
French voters generally, and among rank-and-file UDF members gave Mr Madelin a large majority before yesterday's

Francois Léotard, however had the backing of the UDF ap-paratus and the complicated voting mechanism for the leadership - a three-part electoral college - gave him a relatively

easy victory.

But he also bad a hidden weapon in the shape of a running mate, Francois Bayrou.

Mr Bayrou, education minister for for the past three years, is a political bruiser equal to Mr Madelin but more canny, as he showed yesterday. He used his position as a can-didate for the UDF national council to deliver a ruthless and highly personal attack on Mr Madelin, painting him as a believer in US-style welfare cuts

and cheap employment.

Mr Bayrou's intervention saved Mr Leotard whose own campaign speech had been lacklustre and pessimistic. Speaking of the "crisis" afflicting France, he said it was not just a crisis of jobs or Aids but "a formidable crisis of civilisation".

Mr Bayrou, bowever, will want his reward. He is believed to have backed Mr Leotard only on condition that he vacates the leadership in three years' time. He bas never concealed his presidential ambitions, and leadership of the UDF would give him a power hase from which to stand in 2002.

This, however, assumes both that Mr Léotard agrees to stand down and that the UDF is still a fighting force after the 1998 arliamentary elections.

Both Mr Giscard d'Estaing

and Mr Madelin, along with many French political analysts, agree that without a strong, unifying and radical leader with popular appeal, the UDF risks fragmenting into the small parties from which it was formed.



Pathologists in Mrkonjic Grad examining exhumed bodies being handed to Bosnian Serbs under terms of the Dayton deal

Serbs give up duo suspected of war crimes

EMMA DALY

Under intense pressure from Washington, Belgrade has surrendered to the international war-crimes tribunal two soldiers who confessed to involvement in the murder of hundreds of Muslims.

Zagreb is expected to compound a good weekend for the tribunal today, handing over a senior Bosnian Croat commander indicted for alleged massacres of Muslims in 1993. Drazen Erdemovic, a Croat. and Radoslav Kremenovic, both

soldiers in the Bosnian Serb army, were transferred to the court in the Hague on Saturday as witnesses and possible warcrimes suspects. The two, seeking protection

from former comrades, told reporters they had been forced to take part in the massacre of more than 900 Bosnian Muslim men captured after the fall of Srebrenica last July. Mr Erdemovic, who said he

was an unwilling participant in the mass killings at Branjevo farm, near Janja, in eastern Bosnia, went into hiding last year, fearing retribution from other soldiers at the site.

He was arrested in Serbia hours after talking to reporters. but Belgrade, which has delayed on promises to co-operate with the court, was persuaded to turn cials have said they may be indicted for war crimes.

Belgrade's fear may he that their testimony is likely to bolster the indictments of the Bosnian Serb civilian and military leaders, Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladic. accused in the disappearance of up to 8,000 people from Srchrenica. Speaking on a visit to Sarajevo yesterday, the US De-fense Secretary, William Perry, said: "I do not expect either Karadzie or Mladie to be in positions of power by the end of this year.

Mr Karadzic appears to think differently. He emerged from the shadows yesterday to address a rally of Serb troops and be feted as leader of his nation. Ignoring thousands of Nato troops in nearby Sarajevo who are supposed to arrest him should they cross his path. Mr Karadzic appeared at a factory building in the Serb "capital" of Pale to hand out medals to

Bosnian Serb fighters. Croatia, equally loath to hand over its clients to the Hague, has also agreed to US demands that General Tihomir Blaskic, former head of the Bosnian Croat militia, surrender to the court. He is expected to turn himself in today, accused of ordering the murders of Muslims during the Muslim-Croat war in Bosnia in 1993.

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HK Chinese join rush to apply for British passports

STEPHEN VINES Hong Kong

It was hardly planned this way but yesterday two of Hong Kong's higgest sports stadiums were crammed full of people.

One held an expatriate-dominated crowd of spectators watching the very British tribal event known as the international rughy sevens, while the other, situated near to the Immigration Department, held a rather more significant queue of Hong Kong Chinese making last minute applications for registration as British citizens so that they can qualify for British National (Overseas) (BNO) passports, a document of little value which resolutely does not allow

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Yet in the past few days tens of thousands have joined monster queues to secure registration as British Dependent Territory Citizens, although in a year's time they will no longer he in a British dependent territory and will become citizens of the People's Republic of Chi-

A middle-aged woman surnamed Chan, emerging weary hut triumphant from the Immigration Department, neatly summed up the reason why she had made an effort to register before yesterday's midnight deadline.

"Even this passport is better than the Chinese one," she

holders to become real British said. "I have more confidence

Chins appears to have gone out of its way to diminish confidence in recent days. The plan to abolish the legislature was formally announced, civil servants were told they would have to sign loyalty pledges, all members of democratic parties were summarily ruled out of eligibility for the new (wholly appointed) legislature and even one notoriously vacillating but democratically-minded member of China's appointed body which is preparing for the transfer of power was told that a failure to vote in favour of the abolition of the legislature ruled him out for future membership. Against this background of

GROSS RATE OF

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Account Issues 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, B, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15 & 16. No 1 Capital (11), Tiered Rate Bond, First Class Bond, 2 Year Premium Share Account, Vantage Bond, No 1 Gross, Triple Bonus (††), Bristol Plus, Moneylink, Snoopy, Guaranteed Equity Bond 3 Year Issue 1, Guaranteed Equity Bond 3 Year Issue 3, Bonus Interest Bond Issue 1, Capital Maker Bond and Capital Maker TESSA.

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Beating the deadline: Hong Kong citizens collect their forms to apply for British overseas passports before last night's de

events, which have all taken sation registration. Both Hong place in the space of a week, those who are eligible for this curious form of second-class British citizenship have joined seot the last-minute scramble to the queue for British naturali-

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4.80%

Kong government and Chinese officials and China's supporters in the colony have sought to preohtain British Dependent Ter-

HVESTER

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GROSS RATE OF

CVARIABLES

5.94%

ritory citizenship as a mere technicality.

"It gives them more choices abroad," said Rita Fan, one of China's chief advisers. She was suggesting that local people

KET PA**

4.75%

were merely interested in visafree travel.

There is an element of truth in this because holders of BNO passports have visa-free access to some 80 countries, while only Britain, after a long row, and Singapore have offered the same facility to the new Spe-cial Administrative Region of Hong Kong passport which will be issued next year.

However, this may be a side issue. Those who have sought British nationality are well aware that it does not bestow the right of abode in Britain but believe it will carry some kind of international status which ously wrong in the new Hong

Significantly, a high propor-tion of China's Hong Kong advisers have access to foreign passports and practically all senior civil servants have been given the option of full British citizenship as a safety net

vocal in assuring the rest of the population that everything will be all right after the Chinese

takeover on 1 July 1997. Meanwhile, over at the Hong Kong Stadium the aggressively British-style orgy of drinking, mildly outrageous behaviour and, to a lesser extent, sport, was taking place with local people

giving it a wide berth. The minority of foreigners who wish to remain in the territory after it reverts to Chinese rule were among those joining the lines outside the Immigration Department. However in this, as in a great number of oth-er matters. China has failed to may be useful if things go seri- make clear the conditions under which they may be able

to stay.
This, and a host of other uncertainties, has persuaded large numbers of local people to seek the security of a British passport, even though it carries no citizenship and may well cause problems for holders as the incoming administration

inducement for staying put. Those with the means of Those with the means of has made clear its dislike of the escape have been the most British nationality scheme. Israeli beatings mar Palm Sunday

STEPHANIE NOLEN Jerusalem

A traditional Palm Suoday parade in Jerusalem, held every year since Turkish rule, was marred yesterday when Israeli soldiers stopped the march and

altacked young scouts who they

said refused to leave the street. Israeli police watching the parade ordered leaders to take down a Palestinian flag, which they said may not be flown in

Jerusalem. The flag was put away. But moments later, when the scouts tried to move into the road to enter the Christian Quarter of the Old City, police ordered them on to the sidewalk. Chaos ensued as scouts humped into tourists. Young scouts were pushed out into the road, while marchers at the rear of the parade, oblivious to the confusion. pressed forward. About 60 Israeli soldiers in riot gear arrived. When the scouts at the head of the parade were pushed against them, the soldiers becan to

Four marchers were taken to profaned Palm Sunday." he hospital, including George Bides, 15, whose leg was broken

strike out with wooden batons.

and four boys were arrested. Lo-cal priests worked their way to the middle of the fray, trying to disperse the crowd, many still holding their palm branches.

"We got permission from the police to have this parade, on the same route we have used for hundreds of years, said an Arah Catholic scout leader. The trouble began when Nabil Toubassi. The next thing I knew the soldiers were beating the children.

Palestinians in the crowd said they believed the Israelis stopped the parade in retaliation for the Hamas suicide bombings. About 4,000 scouts normally participate, but this year only 500 came to Jerusalem hecause of the Israeli closure of the occu-

pied territories. The Latin patriarch, Michel Sabbah, head of the Palestinian Catholic Church, condemned the Israeli interference, noting it came days after Israel announced it will confiscate hundreds of acres of Palestinian land in Bethlehem to construct a military road to join two settlements. They profuned our holy week, and now they have said. "Are there no Christian rights here?

informative:

With effect from 1 April 1996, First Direct will offer the following gross credit interest rates. The net rates shown here assume the rate of income tax of 20% which comes into effect on 6 April. Interest paid before 6 April will be subject to basic rate

Interest	Gross	Gross CAR % p.a.	Net % p.a.	Net CAR
£1 to £2,499	3.00	3.04	2.40	2.42
£2,500 to £24,999	3.50	3.55	2.80	2.83
225,000 to £99,999	4.25	4.33	3.40	3.45
2100,000 to £249,999	4.75	4.85	3.80	3.86
£250,000 +	5.00	5.11	4.00	4.07
Direct Interest Sa	vings ,	Account you	notiv £0 C	av Account
The following rates for reflect the move from effective from 11 April Interest	annual to	o quarterly inte	rest whi	ch is
	% p.a.	Gross CAR % p.a.	Net % p.a.	Net CAF % p.a.
£1 to £999	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.40
£1,000 to £2,499	4.25	4.31	3.40	3.44
£2,500 to £24,999	5.25	5.35	4.20	4.26
£25,000 to £99,999	5.75	5.B7	4.60	4.67
£100,000 to £249,999	6.00	6.13	4.80	4.88
£250,000 +	6.25	6.39	5.00	5.09
Fixed In	terest !	Savings Acc	count	
Interest	Gross	Net		
Territ	% p.a.	% p.s.		
6 months	5.50	4.40		
1 year	5.75	4.60		
2 years	6.375	5.10		
3 years	6.75	5.40		
Cheque Accoun	t and F	remier Che	Due Ac	
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% p.a. % p.a. % p.a. All credit balances 0.30 Groups the rate before the declaration of tax applied to interest on serving.

Note the net rate allows for the declaration of tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to interest on 50 tax at the rate applied to 50 tax a

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on maturity.			
PREMIER TESSA (Available from 01/01/96) A Follow-Up TESSA designed for savers whose original	£9,000 £5,000+ £3,000+	6.05% 5.75% 5.75%	
TESSA has matured.	£500+ £1+	3.95% 0.35%	
PREMIER RESERVE BOND A competitive one year bond for Bristol & West follow-up TESSA holders only.	£1,000+ £1+	5.85% 0.35%	· 4.68% 0.28%
BONUS TESSA (No longer available) A 5 year savings account with tax free interest and a guaranteed interest bonus on maturity.	£3,000+ £500+ £1+	4.40% 2.90% 0.50%	
THE CHILDREN'S ACCOUNT The Instant access account for children under 14 years of age.	£1+	1.90%	1.52%
SAVINGS SHARES (No longer available) Rates also apply to Cheshunt Regular Monthly Savings.	£1+	0.70%	0.56%
SECURE INVESTMENT ACCOUNT	£2,000+	6.35%	5.08%
FULLY PAID SHARE interest paid six monthly. Rates also apply to Cheshunt Investment Share, Cheshunt Clubs, Cheshunt Ex Thrift and Cheshunt Subscription Share. (No tonger available).	£50,000+ £25,000+ £10,000+ £5,000+ £2,000+ £500+ £1+	2.62% 2.47% 2.13% 1.64% 1.14% 0.25% 0.20%	2.09% 1.98% 1.70% 1.31% 0.92% 0.20%
BONUS BOND (Issue 2) (No longer available) 12 month Bond account with added toyalty interest Bonus of 0.25% gross pa on renawal in 1st and 2nd year.	£250,000+ £100,000+ £50,000+ £25,000+ £10,000+ £5,000+	5.40% 5.30% 5.20% 5.20% 4.70% 4.20%	4.32% 4.24% 4.16% 4.16% 3.76% 3.36%
BONUS INCOME BOND Issoe 2 (No longer available) 12 month Bond with added Loyalty Interest Bonus of 0.25% gross pa on renewal in 1st and 2nd year.	£250,000+ £100,000+ £50,000+ £25,000+ £10,000+ £5,000+	5.27% 5.18% 5.08% 5.08% 4.60% 4.12%	4.22% 4.14% 4.06% 4.06% 3.68% 3.30%
CHESHUNT SPECIAL 90 (No longer available) Rates also apply to Cheshunt Special 90 Gross and Cheshunt Charity 90.	£50,000+ £20,000+ £5,000+ £500+ £1+	3.90% 3.60% 2.60% 2.20% 0.20%	3.12% 2.88% 2.08% 1.76% 0.16%
CHESHUNT SPECIAL 90 INCOME (No longer available)	£50,000+ £20,000+ £5,000+ £500+ £1+	3.83% 3.54% 2.57% 2.18% 0.20%	3.117% 2.83% 2.06% 1.74% 0.16%
CHESHUNT TESSA (No tonger available) Rates also apply to	£1+	4.70%	

NOTICE FOR ACCOUNT HOLDERS

As from 6th April 1996 the Society will be required to deduct tax at the lower rate instead of basic rate (where the investor has not self-confirmed his or her eligibility to receive interest gross). Accordingly the terms and conditions of all the Society's investment accounts are hereby amended so that any reference to basic rate tax is to be taken as a reference to the appropriate rate of tax. Likewise until the Society has the opportunity to reprint account brochures, prospective investors are asked to bear in mind the change to lower rate tax as from 6th April 1996.



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buzkashi explains a lot about a chaotic country. writes Tim McGirk in Mazar-e-Sharif

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"If he smiles at you, it means you're a dead man." That was my introduction to Rasool Pahlawan, a warlord in the Afghan city Mazar-e-Sharif, who goes by the appropriate nickname Butcher of the North".

Among the many perks of being a warlord in Afghanistan today are the toys: tanks, armoured personnel carriers, helicopters, and bodyguards who carry a quiverful of rocket-propelled grenades. But no pos-session means as much to Rasool as his buzkashi horse.

Buzkashi is Afghanistan's national game, in which hundreds of horsemen whip and fight each other for the pleasure of grabbing a headless calf. It is a dangerous game, one at which Rasool, a large and powerful man, excels.

Buzkashi is as close to warfare as any game on earth. Brought down ages ago by the Mongol hordes (they still call him "Mr Genghis" in Mazar-e-Sharif), the horsemen are said to have used humans instead of dead calves to play buzkashi.

Louis Dupree, a historian of Afghanistan, wrote that these nomads "used prisoners of war instead of goats or calves, dismembering the hapless creatures and reducing them to masses of hominid jelly during the play". (With huzkashi in their blood, Afghans were never keen on cricket when the British brought their gentcel sport over the Khyber Pass.)

Buzkashi has few, if any, rules. I saw a game held to celebrate the circumcision of another warlord's son. It took place in a rainy field near jagged blue mountains. The game was so fierce, so anarchic, it was impossible to tell if there were two teams or whether it was a frecfor-all with every man for himself. It is a bit like politics in this country; the participants never know whose side the others really are on.

The object of the game is to steal the carcass, carry it around a flag about 400 metres away.



Killing fields: Afghan riders fighting for the headless calf used to play buzkashi. To win the carcass must be carried around a flag and dumped in a circle

dump it into a chalked-out ring. and collect the prize money. It may sound easy, but keep in mind that there are anywhere between 50 and several hundred horsemen trying through every means short of murder to separate the rider from the carcuss. (Guns and knives are banned,

but whips are allowed.) And the dead calf is nearly impossible to hold, It weighs about 100lhs and is slimy from heing dunked for several days in cold water. Adding to the

mayhem, every so often, dozens of men on donkeys, clowning around, will ride into the midthe of the game, carrying animal carcasses killed on the road which they simg into the ring and demand the winner's prize. The best buzkashi players,

says Roland Michaud, a Frenchman who studied the game, have lyrical names such as Murad the Cunning or Muki the Hawk, Now Rasool the Butcher (though nobody dares call him that to his face) tops the list. buzkashi. And if he does not win

Afghans say: "Better a bad rider on a good horse than a good rider on a bad horse," and Rasool is a good rider on a good horse. In between matches, when the riders stop for water. they all seem the best of friends. But once the game starts the laughter stops and they fall on each other like woives fighting over a kill. Then, after the game, they are friends again.

he gets angry. And then perhaps he will smile at the rider who snatched away his prize. So now, when Rasool gallops out onto the field, there are few men brave, or stupid, enough to challenge him.

The clders, who wear circular hats lined with fox fur to protect themselves against the winter rain, complain quietly that it was never like this in the past, that any horseman could prove his skills at buzkashi without having to worry about the clan leaders taking revenge. But this new generation of warlords and commanders, say the elders, have lost respect for many of the old Uzbek civilities.

In huzkashi legend, the son of one clan chieftain fell in love with the daughter of his father's buzkashi rival. The rival promised his daughter to the lover if he switched sides and competed against his own father in buzkashi. He agreed, and the game ranged over many miles. So intent were the father and his

son at winning that they rode their horses over a cliff. Even mid-air, hurtling to their aths, they were still wrestling for the carcass.

If chess is the game for the Western military strategist, and go for the East, then huzkashi, with all its savagery and singlemindedness, is perhaps the only way of explaining why the Afghans have inflicted so much war and devastation on their country, and why a warlord' smile can mean death

Germans fear lapse into 'Euro-fatigue'

Bonn- The German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said yesterday that plans for European union had failed to inspire Europeans but urged them not to lapse into a state of "Eurofatigue". On Saturday, Chancellor Helmut Kohl urged EU member states not to waver from the path to "genuine" union, saving Maastricht was a great opportunity which Euroceans should use to the full. Mr Kohl and Mr Kinkel were speaking after their return from the Inter-Governmental Conference (IGC) in Turin

'Bandit Queen' runs

New Delhi -- India's notorious Bandit Queen" will run in clections for the federal parliament, news reports said yesterday. Phoolan Devi, who earned her nickname for reportedly murdering 20 high caste men to avenge her rape, spent 11 years in jailhefore she was freed on bail in 1994. Mrs Devi will run on the Socialist Party ticket from Mirzapur in Litter Pradesh state.

Kuwaitis accused

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Baghdad — Iraq accused Kuwait of recruiting agents to carry out sabotage attacks on the Iraci people, United Nations observers and arms inspectors.

Israelis attack

Sidon - Israeli gunners responded to rocket attacks on northern Israel with an all-night assault on 15 Shiite Muslim villages in south Lebanon. forcing hundreds of families to flee for several hours.

Nigerians fired

Lagos — Nigeria's military ruler, General Sani Abacha, sacked his army and air force chiefs at the weekend. The firings come amid a high-profile visit by a UN delegation to evaluate Nigeria's progress toward democracy.

Papal appeal

Vatican City — The Pope, speaking after Palm Sunday eremonies, appealed for the release of seven French monks kidnapped in Algeria. The monks, members of the Trappist order, were kidnapped from a mountain monastery on Wednesday, reportedly Muslim militants.

Tamils attack

Colombo - At least 35 separatist rebels and 10 sailors were killed after Tamil rebels launched a daring attack on a yesterday.

Togo sorry for death

Lome — Togo's President, Gnassingbe Eyadema, has formally apologised to Germany for the death of a German diplomat, shot by security forces in Lome last week. Germany lodged a strong protest and de-manded an investigation into the killing of an embassy technical adviser. Thomas Rup-Reuter

Imperial past casts shadow over Japan's monument to peace

But Raspol Pahlawan is dif-

ferent. He likes to win at

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY

It should have been a proud and momentous day for the city of Nagasaki. After five years of preparation and a solemn ribbon-cutting ceremony yesterday. the city will this morning open the doors of its finest monument, the new Atomic Bomb Museum. But its opening is

This week and

Section Two has a

with more pages,

expanded listings

section providing

Britain's most

completely new look,

new features, a daily

radio column and an

comprehensive daily

guide to going out.

every week,

steeped in controversy. Situated in a gleaming new building in the city's peace park, the museum cost yen 7.6bn (about

Its 1,600 exhibits, including maps, interactive videos and gruesome photographs, de-scribe in detail the moment, on 9 August 1945, when a plutonium bomb exploded over the city, killing more than 70,000

people. But the noble enterprise, which aimed "to serve as a symbol of Nagasaki and its cfforts to bring about lasting world peace", has become a political football bounced between right-wing revisionists and

Japan's Asian neighbours. The trouble began at the end of February when a précis of the new exhibition was shown to a group of conservative coun-

cillors on the local assembly. They took keen exception to a section of the museum describing the history of Japanese aggression in China and Southeast Asia. After a formal protest from the assemblymen and a group of nationalistic local businessmen, several passages were removed from the written text and a photograph of civilians in the Chinese city of Nanking

massacred by the Imperial Army in 1937 was replaced by a picture of Japanese troops victoriously entering the city.
The amendments were an-

grily reported in the Chinese media. including the govern-ment-sponsored People's Daily. For centuries, Nagasaki has had one of the higgest Chinese populations in Japan, as well as a consulate and numerous Chi-

controversial photograph was changed yet again - the com-promise, which the museum's first visitors will see today, shows Chinese women being bundled off for execution by

nese businesses. Last week, the

Japanese soldiers. At yesterday's official opening protesters handed out leaflets complaining that the exhibition makes scant mention of the

20,000 Koreans, many of them slave labourers, who died in the bombing. Compared to other official accounts of the war, however, the remaining exhibits are still exceptionally strong. A video display of the Imperial Army troops in Manchuria refers unequivocally to the Japanese "invasion", a taboo word which still provokes even the conservative Japanese to squirm.

SWEEKII THE INDEPENDENT

in Today Tony Blair and Bill Clinton: are they destined for a special relationship? Global warming and you: man halrdressers. Plus Network: the complete PC guide. made penis that will affect us all. The new Family Life A 24-page section with all the action from a big weekend of sport. Plus: The Monday interview: Vicente section looks into how to backpack without tears. Do

on Tuesday

Part three of The Scorched Earth; how do we slow down the global warming process? Plus: Health - the mother of a brain-injured teenager

we need... Dennis the Menace: Jim White conducts a

personal investigation into whether there is a place in

the modem world for the classical naughty boy. Julie Myerson meanwhile takes her naughty boy to the

> is conviinced she has found a treatment to help her son. Also on Tuesday, fashion, architecture, visual arts

Modahl on masterminding Diane's redemption. The

Grand National: the agony of the waiting game. And it's an all-red FA Cup Final, Liverpool vs Manchester

United, dream or nightmare?

Theatre: "Jeckyll: the musical" opened in Bromley last week. What are the chances of a West End transfer? We talk to the backers and review the show. Plus: midweek travel section, your money, finance and law.

In our back pages, Martin Newell, Britain's leading rock poet, and Neil Kerber, one of the country's funniest cartoonists, present their views of the modern world.

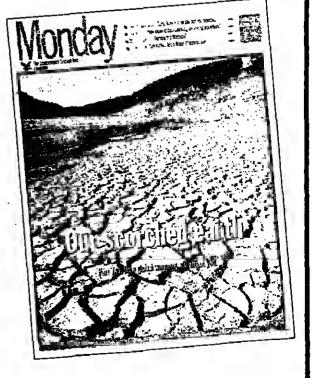
All our regular features, including Dilemmas, John Walsh's column, plus film, education and graduate plus. In the back pages, William Hartston's history of

24Seven - a new 20-page pull-out-and-keep entertainment and listings section. Including a complete day-by-day planner for the week ahead, plus the world in 101/2 inches

seven-day TV, radio and satellite listings, ticket offers

eight pages of pop and classical music

and informed comment on the week's highlights. Plus:



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Montana stand-off: Government desperate to avoid repeat of Waco débâcle as white extremists hold out into second week



NATIONWIDE

MORTGAGES

A GUIDE TO WINNING

Softly softly as FBI lays siege to far-right sect

The FBI's new low-key, restrained policy in the seven first results this weekend, as a leader of the far-right anti-Government sect handed him-Mediation offers meanwhile have started to pour in, reput-edly including one from Randy Weaver, the white supremacist

botched federal siege in 1992. Richard Clark, wanted along with many of the other heavily armed Freemen holed up at the snow-covered ranch outside the small town of Jordan on charges of financial fraud and extortion, surrendered at Grassrange, a

settlement some 90 miles west of where the siege is being conducted by an estimated 100 FBI agents - all stationed out of view of the farm huildings.

Details of those inside are

sketchy, but police reckon some 20 people are at the ranch, including at least two children, girls aged eight and 10. Sever-al are members of local families like the Clarks, split asunder by the cult that has grown up in their midst. Last autumn Dean Clark. Richard's son, found himself confronted by his father and his grandfather carrying shotguns when he went to collect wheat and barley from land he had rented on the ranch. Should he ever return, they warned, they would kill him.

If the vast, craggy state of Montana - as large as Germany but with only 800,000 people is a natural home of anti-Government separatists, extrem-ists, and cranks of every hue, the Freemen are among the most impassioned specimens on offer, dedicated to God and guns and bent on setting up a white Christian nation, subject to no authority other than their

However, their alleged crimes have been more prosac, essentially frauds totalling \$1.8m (£1.2m), and the non-violent nature of these offences is one reason why the authorities seem determined to wait

Even more important however, the FBI is desperate to avoid a bloody debacle along the ines of Waco, where 83 members of a religious cult died after federal agents stormed their headquarters in April 1993; or shot dead Mr Weaver's son and wife in their attempt to

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Even so, to accept mediation could be risky. Officials here acincreasing the danger of confrontation. It might also at-

events of 1996. The action. one of the remotest areas of the country. The ranch itself is 30 miles from Jordan, whose two been occupied by FBI agents.

For the region, the press inchines are few and far between while most cellular phone networks do not include so thinly shahited a region.

The scores of reporters and the network film crews covering the stand-off have been forced to rent local rooms at exorbitant rates, ship in mobile homes, or commute daily from Miles City, 83 miles away to the southeast (though Montana's recent decision to scrap the former 65 mph speed limit has re-duced driving time to little more than an bour); If the FBI maintains its current policy, they may face a long stay. As well as thousands of rounds of of Ruby Ridge eight months ammunition, the besieged earlier, when federal agents Freemen are said to have stockpiled food enough to last for

Mayor with mostest hugs the limelight

When Antanas Mockus, the 44-year-old Mayor of Bogota, got married in January, he and his bride took their vows while astride an elephant inside a cage full of Bengali tigers.
As a snub to the Roman

Catholic Church, in which he had been married once before, Mr Mockus had rented a local circus for the wedding.

All guests, including his family, the best man and the bridesmaids, had to pay an entrance fee and the proceeds went to feeding the Colombian capital's

street children. Not only is Mr Mockus the most popular Bogota mayor of recent times, he is also the most popular man in Colombia and the most likely next president. Opinion polis suggest he would be be a runaway winner were elections to be held now.

The elections are not due until 1998 hut Colombia's narcocorruption scandal, with President Ernesto Samper under investigation over cocaine-cartel funding of his campaign, means a snap poll may have to be held this year and the mayor has said he will run.

Born in Bogota of Lithuanian parents, and partly educated in France, Mr Mockus was a well-known professor of both philosophy and mathematics at Colombia's National University until he was elected mayor in 1994. He won without really campaigning. He didn't have to. He was already a wellknown eccentric, renowned most for dropping his trousers during a university debate and exposing his bare trasero (backside) to an interlocutor whose views he did not share.

As mayor of the world's most violent capital, Mr Mockus's motto is simple: lighten up and hug each other a lot. He encourages his City Hall employees to hug one another when they come and go and encourages humour to release the stress and anger that has given the city a record per capita homicide rate.

So far, there is little sign that the violence has eased but Mr Mockus, whose beard gives him the look of a young Solzhenitsyn, has certainly put a smile on the faces of Bogota residents. He has even sent in the clowns.

HEROES: 10

Antanas Mockus

Concerned about aggressive behaviour by pedestrians, he ordered municipal officials to dress up as clowns and make fun of anyone caught crossing streets against a red light or showing any other signs of antisocial behaviour. Walking in the city centre, you'll hear bursts of laughter as pedestrians watch the clowns mimic the guilty party. "Humiliation is more effective than fines," says Mr Mockus.

He issued traffic policemen with red cards and whistles and ordered them to show the card, football referee-style, as a symbolic put-down to anyone vio-

lating traffic rules.

After upsetting the city's taxidrivers by barring them from carrying guns - most did so for their own protection - he won back their support by raising the hasic fare. As for the traffic aggression that led to many homicides, he came up with a scheme aimed at encouraging drivers to let off steam without going for their guns.

When motorists pay their road tax, they are issued with a cut-out green fist and a white one. The green is shaped like a thumbs-down and is to be displayed when you're upset with another driver. The white one shows a thumbs-up and is to be shown to any motorist who shows courtesy. Residents say the green card is regularly seen but the white one is somewhat

At a recent press conference, Mr Mockus produced a human-shaped figure made out of yellow balloons and began beating it up, slapping it against a wall. "Tim imagining this is someone that hurt me when I was a child, he told said. When you're angry, don't botthe it up or take it out on the person who hurt you. Make a balloon man and take it out on the balloons,"

Phil Davison



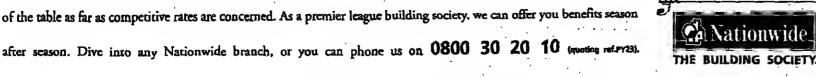
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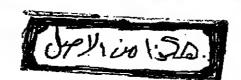
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YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT.



Pity the poor scientists who are deliberating over what should be done about BSE. "I almost want to crawl into a hole," one was reported as saying last week. "I look at the paper and think, my God, we've killed off a £500m export industry. You can't imagine what it's like. But we have to make these decisions, and we will."

Well, I'm not so sure. I'm not so

Well, I'm not so sure. I'm not so sure that it ought to be scientists alone who make these decisions; and I'm not so sure, either, that in the end the higgest victim of mad cow disease will be the British heef industry or (heaven forbid) the meat-eating public, but rather science itself. Few debates in recent years have exposed scientific expertise to the harsh light of public scrutiny quite as BSE has done, and given the way the debate seems to be going there is a real possibility that the result will he extremely damaging.

damaging.

It is only relatively recently that science earned for itself a position of respect in the public domain. A little over a century ago, leading scientists like Thomas Huxley and John Tyndall fought for favour with a British establishment that was more inclined to look to clergymen than to chemists or cosmologists for "expert" judgements on the issues of the day. By 1900, science had won

the day. By 1900, science had won the ideological battle for cultural recognition; but real political influence didn't come until the experience of world war finally convinced the UK that knowledge was a crucial ingredient in industrial and military success.

itary success.

Those born after the end of the Second World War grew up in a climate of extraordinary optimism about science and technology. The period from 1945 to 1965 was the heyday of deference to the scientific expert. He (it was almost always he) was the architect of astonishing oew discoveries — jet-powered aircraft, atomic power, antibiotics — which were bound to make the world a better place. Hoping to cash in on science's extraordinary success, others aped its methods in supposedly scientific studies of everything from parenting (remember all those postwar childcare "experts"?) to international politics (much of mathematical game theory came out of cold-war strategic studies).

This was the time when science was generally regarded as the coosumer's friend. In the early days of commercial advertising on television white-coated experts happily endorsed the latest kitchen gadgets, washing powders, toothpaste and patent medicines. In the high street, the endorsement of the laboratory scientist was an apparently automatic seal of approval, a guarantee that products were not merely new hut somehow improved. If science said something was good for us,

then it was good for us.

Since 1965 several things have conspired to undermine this modernist deference to science. For one thing, the instrumental success of science – itself a crucial ingredient in the rise of the scientific expert – backfired on the reputation of science, as first the disarmament movement rejected nuclear weapons and theo the student movement resisted the military uses of science and technology in Vietnam.

technology in Vietnam.

Added to this was the growing awareness of the downside of civil



R&D in the early environmental movement's protest against pesticides and pollution. In the 1950s, civil nuclear power had been a symbol of scientific and technological progress; but by the 1970s it was widely opposed by people who saw it as a symbol of all that was wrong with so-called advanced industrial society. Today, there is a general sense that

by John Durant

we are in transition from modernism to something not so casily described but none the less radically different. Terms such as "post-industrialism" and "post-modernism" refer in part to a less monolithic, more pluralist culture in which all of the old certainties – religious, political and scientific – are in question. Post-modern culture is altogether less deferential towards experts of all kinds: hishops scarcely count any more; politicians are widely vilified; and even scientists (the latest and in

many ways still the most widely respected authority figures in our culture) have a tougher time maintaining their public reputations. In what Ulrich Beck calls "the risk society", science is no longer simply regarded as a source of solutions; it is increasingly seen as part of the problem.

The new, more sceptical attitude towards science is all around us. It

is apparent, for example, in the increasing confidence with which pressure groups such as Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace contest scientific evidence on environmental issues; and it is equally evident in the increasing assertiveness of the consumer movement. Even in the courtroom, traditionally a place where scientific experts were deferred to by judges and juries alike, they have had an increasingly rough ride. In the most widely publicised trial of modern times, an American jury recently turned its back on the hulk of the forensic evidence it had been offered by electing to acquit OJ Simpson.

This, then, is the context in which British scientists are advising oo what to do about BSE. Two generations ago, it might conceivably have been possible to regard BSE as

a reasonably straightforward matter. A new disease of cattle having been diagnosed, the possible risks to other cattle and to humans would have been assessed by a panel of experts advisers, and appropriate action would have been put in hand by government. This, in fact, might pass as a reasonable summary of the present Government's policy. The

In fact, their ignorance of the disease — of its origins, of the nature of the infectious agent, or its mode(s) of transmission, or its host range, or its relationship with Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease in humans—is so great that it is far from clear what solid scientific basis there can possibly have been for many of the confident and frequently unqualified pronounce-

Scientists don't actually know much about BSE – its origins, the infectious agent, its relationship with CJD

trouble is, though, that we're living in the 1990s, not the 1950s; and a purely technocratic approach such as this is no longer creditable. Listening to current Government pronouncements about BSE is like living in a time warp; it is as if 30 years of questlooing and criticism had simply not taken place.

What is wrong with simple deference to the scientific experts on BSE? First and foremost, by their own admission the scientists don't actually know very much about BSE.

issued by the Ministry of Agriculture over the past few years.

A second problem with deferring to the scientific experts in cases such as these is the problematic nature of risk assessment. In Beck's "risk society" risk assessment becomes something of a cult. Today, an almost magical aura surrounds the estimation of probable harm – despite the fact that for the most part such estimation is a mixture of science and speculation. For example, just con-

f humans from the infected brains and nervous tissues of cows suffering from BSE. At one end of a spectrum of scientificity we have measurement of the levels of infectivity in different tissues, and at the other we have the daily business of the slaughtering and dismemberment of cattle.

What is the scientific discipline which delivers safe verdicts concerning the reliable separation of

risky from non-risky parts of cows?

sider for a moment what is really

involved in estimating the risk to

Even supposing that BSE itself was better understood and that all the relevant risks were reliably calculable, it is far from clear that science alone would provide a sufficient basis for public policy. Public policy must take account of many things: the nature of BSE; the extent of the probable risks; the nature and condition of the beef industry, the state of public attitudes and public opinion; and much else besides. At best, the scientific advisers who have been in the spotlight over BSE for almost a decade are competent to judge only some of these things. Yet at times the Government has appeared to lean on these advisers so heavily that the proper boundary

between scientific and political judgement has been blurred. I should like to bave answers to

the following questions:

How, in a situation of enormous scientific ignorance and uncertainty, have scientists allowed their names and reputations to become firmly attached to unequivocal pronouncements by government and industry representatives on the safety of eating British beef?

Why, in a situation where sci-

• Why, in a situation where science, industry and public health are all necessarily involved, have scientists alone been deemed uniquely competent to pick their way through the issues?

• Why, when public confidence was always to be at least as important as public understanding and information, have scientists been left to deliberate the issues in private, without benefit even of "public interest" representatives on their expert committees?

Increasing public awareness of the true extent and limitations of scientific ignorance and uncertainty is part of our "post-modern" condition; it is part of Beck's "risk society". Ideally, the policy-making process should respond to this awareness by acknowledging the existence of ignorance and uncertainty and drawing experts, policy-makers and the publications.

experts, policy-makers and the public into a mature debate of the issues. In the case of BSE, this has signally failed to happen. Instead, we have witnessed the old and dismally familiar pattern of bland political reassurance coupled with steadily declining public confidence.

declining public confidence.

In the present situation, with a major industry under threat and the extent of any public health problem still far from clear, it may seem perverse and self-seeking to worry about the fate of science. But science is important. For all its imperfections, scientific knowledge is an enormously valuable asset. In order to take advantage of this asset, however, we depend upon public confidence in science and scientists as credible sources of ideas and information in their appropriate areas of expertise. It would be a tragedy if the misuse of scientific expertise were to undermine public confidence. That way lies know-nothing fundamentalism and, ultimately, the return to barbarism.

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Paradoxically, the salvation of scientific expertise in the public domain lies in a greater recognition of the proper limits of science. Our public and political cultures need a greater appreciation of what science can and cannot be called upon to do. Such an appreciation will come in part from a certain amount of well-judged modesty on the part of scientists and in part from an opening up of the processes by which scientists deliberate and decide on issues such as BSE. The days are gone when scientists could expect different rules to apply to them: if they wish their views to command public confidence and public respect, then (like everyone else) they must conduct their busings of the processes of the processe

ness openly and transparently.
Without a proper appreciation of
the nature and limits of scientific
expertise, the public are likely to
remain caught between undue deference and undue scepticism about
science. As things are at present, we
seem to be moving with alarming
rapidity from the one to the other.

The writer is assistant director of the

DIARY 1

Murder most foul on the BBC

The BBC is likely to face its most severe criticism yet for putting too much sex and violence on screen with a new drama season for schools that breaks all previous barriers.

The new seasoo of daytime plays, which begins today, will contain scenes of teenage sex, rape, murder, killing babies, cross-dressing and suggested incest. In one drama a girl has her tongue cut out and her hands hacked off. In the same play, two men are murdered and their remains are eaten in a pie.

Details of the forthcoming BBC season outlined in an internal memo will anger campaigners for a V-chip on television sets so that parents can switch off dramas likely to upset their children. Plays seen at school would foil a V-chip. According to one source in the BBC

According to one source in the BBC education department, it is not so much the worry of offending public morals that should be concerning BBC senior managers as accusations of racism from the Commission for Racial Equality and the Board of Deputies of British Jews.

He added: "I've seen scripts which

He added: "I've seen scripts which have a violent black man murdering his young white hride, and another concerning a vengeful Jewish moneylender. I'd have thought we were in enough trouble already with the Government. I don't believe in censorship as such, but there comes a time when decency and common sense should prevail."

The BBC has decided not to publish details of the entire series in advance of each hroadcast. But it is understood that one contains a scene where a mother and her young son are hrutally murdered by intruders. Another has an old man tied to a chair while his eyes are gouged out

gouged out.

In an attempt to shield the writer from publicity, the BBC refused yesterday to reveal his name. A spokesman said a little lamely: "I hope people will look beyond the sex and violence to the poetry and character insights that

we genuinely believe these plays contain." He added that the Warwickshirebased playwright was not a trendy new writer, but had a proven track record. The series hegins today at 11.55am on

Triple whammy for Blair

I hear that the Labour leader, in his ever-intensifying endeavours in woo the City, took lunch at Barclays Bank with its chief executive, Martin Taylor, and a board member. Blair gave his views on inflation, enterprise, small husinesses and everything else that the two gentlemen wanted in hear, and they beamed with satisfaction as he spoke.

After Blair had departed, the board

member, who as it turned out was the furmer chancellor Nigel Lawson, confided to his chief executive that be found Blair more right-wing than Juhn Major and most members of his Cab-

inct. Lawson apparently sat back in his chair and said of the Labour leader with nn admiring sigh: "He is a true Conservative."

As if that weren't bad enough, Blair discovered last week that he had furgotten the anniversary of his wedding to Cherie (above).

Could anything clse go wrong? Yes, they come in threes, Tony. Delivering the keynote speech to the Federation of Small Businesses in Maidstone, he chose as his theme "Technology Today".



-

The Oscar triumphs of Braveheart, starring Mel Gibson (left) may have confirmed to the world Scotland's image as the land of warrior folk, but those proud Highland clansmen must, I fear, be warned. A radical makeover is stirring in the lowlands. The flamboyant

lowlands. The flamboyant London fashion designer "Sebastian", the man responsible for (among others) Mystic Meg's more unusual ensembles, is designing a brand new tartan. What then, one wonders, will the Scottish Tartans Anthority, whose job it is to "safeguard this internationally valued, unique heritage" by registering new tartans, make of Sebastian's exciting new offering? His tartan is an exotic, explosion of glorious pinks. And its proposed

name? The MacPoof.

What n shame that the state-of-the-art screen behind him should choose to pack np for good halfway through.

Red faces at the Pink 'Un

There was a most mysterious absence from the British Press Awards ceremony last week. Nearly all of Fleet Street's finest were gathered at the sumptuous Royal Lancaster Hotel to wine, dine and backstab as Clive Anderson handed out accolades. All, that is, save the Financial Times. How could this be? Did the highbrow journal perhaps consider itself above such boozy beanos? Surely not. No, the reason is more simple: it had not received a single nomination. Up came the shortlist for Business Reporter of the Year – and no FT candidates. Industrial Reporter of the Year? The same story.

And so on.

Had the pink one really performed that badly? "Absolutely not," an FT insider tells me. "People are very irritated here. We should have been right up there in the running – except that the person in charge of applications clean forgot, and didn't send them off until six weeks after the closing date."

No FT, no comment, no memory, no awards.

Eagle Star flies into trouble

Eagle Star may have a lavish advertising budget, but they have not, I fear, been spending it entirely wisely. One consumer decided he'd had quite enough of their advert on Sky TV, and called up the Independent Television Commission to complain. His complaint was promptly upheld. The problem? The ad was going out in Northern Ireland. And Eagle Stardon't actually offer the troubled province

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Gummer needs a watertight plan

Roll up, roll up. It's the political spring fair, alias the beginning of the General Election campaign. See the man dip his hand into the hran tub and pull out ... hand-mc-down policies, gimmicks and "bright ideas" to be dusted off as shiny and original. Grammar schools. Cottage hospitals. And now, the water wheeze. Today Environment Secretary John Gummer will publish a consultation paper on increasing competition in water supply which will, though he is unlikely to admit it, amount to a confession that the very basis on which water was privatised in the 1980s was mistaken. We must insist that he does not press a glass of water on a ynung relative, however forceful the paparazzi.

Cheaper water would be welcome, and might win votes. But first Mr Gummer and his colleagues owe the public something by way of purification. What is now being admitted is that integrated river basin management, one company for each water region - the principle on which the industry is structured - is not good for consumers. Competition only works if there are more suppliers, bringing water in from further afield. That must imply that the Government will forbid, say, the pro-posed takeover of South West Water by Severn Trent and Wessex, It ought to tell

the Stock Exchange, and quickly.

A year ago the Director General of Water Supply put out a paper which advo-cated easing rules for new suppliers. He also argued for more "network competition" selling water from one area into another, But, he warned opportunities for interreginnal sales, as in gas and electricity, are likely to remain limited.

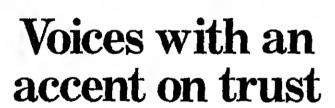
The Government has been embarrassed

must not pretend that introducing competitinn will be easy. Changes in supply to industry can be networked, at least where water companies' pipes are already linked. Domestic supply is less straightforward. Competition must not jeopardise water quality or lead to reduced standards in sew-

erage and the treatment of waste water.
As well as safety and reliability in supply, what matters to consumers is how water is paid for. The Government's plan for metering has now been abandoned. Instead of meters for all, as the 21st century dawns most people will still pay for their water on the basis of a tax - rateable value - which was abandoned in the 1980s.

Unlike gas, water is heavy and expensive to transport. Unlike gas, water quality differs considerably from one part of the country to another - the fur in Lancashire kettles is different from the kitchens of Yorkshire -- that is, when Yorkshire kitchens are supplied with running water. The Government thinks short-term, when the question is how to guarantee supply over the decades to come. Global warming is a fact, its ramifications set out in the second of the "Our Scorched Earth" series in Section Two today. Rainfall deficiency is becoming usual and needs to be planned for.

This is not a regional issue to be left to the prize-winning managers of Yorkshire Water plc. Government alone has the vantage and time horizon to plan a water grid, even if the pipes are built by the companies. A strategy must embrace conservation. reductions in leaks and a plan for new sup-plies. All of these will call for more imaginsulnn and resolve than the Department of the Environment and the Office of Water Supply have yet shown; achieving them will take more than political showmanship.



Why should West Country people sound thick? It is deeply unfair, of enurse. Doubtless Bristol. Plymouth. Taunton and Truro could fill Cape Canaveral with rocket scientists. And yet. There is something about those vowels which sounds, well. claggy.

It would not do if the person answering your phone inquiry about car insurance, banking or phone number used a dialect word such as that. (It means "muddy".) Not that nowadays they are likely to. The United Kingdom is becoming homogenised. Local differences, in public services, in retailing, in culture, become harder to spot. Regional dialect is dving. Yet bucking the trend, regional accents are enjoying a vogue, which is heing fostered by the business community.

The Legal and General insurance company has said it has chosen Wales for a new office because it likes the accent. Other companies have discovered the same appeal, and the hunt is on for where to locate help lines and all those businesses-at-a-distance which rely on banks of clerks who give good phone. Accent matters a lot, but so does use of English. Together they underpin customers' judgements about competence and reliability, likeability, and trustworthiness. The reason why there seem to be so many Scottish voices on the BBC is also why Scotland is tops for "call-centre" businesses. Scots, generally, sound classless, educated and warm; they have an accent but they enunciate. They score highest for both trustwor-

Today is April Fool's Day, the day on which - well, on which what

When I was a child, I was told that

up to midday on I April you could

play tricks on everyone, and get away

with it. This sounded great, but I

could never think of any tricks I

"What kind of tricks?" I asked.

instance, you can tell people that

their shoelaces are undone, and

when they bend down to have a look,

there must be better practical jokes

in the world. I tried the shoelace

joke on people, and although it

occasionally worked neither side

got much fun out of it. The trouble

was, I could never think of a better

one. Putting sugar in the salt?

Putting sugar in the petrol? Digging

up people's gardens? Telling them

that their relatives are dead?

Burning their houses down? Telling

them that their houses bave burnt

down? Telling them that eating beef

I have never done any of these

things. Indeed, I have never really

moved on from the idea that April

Fool's Day was all about telling

Even at the time I suspected that

"Well." said my mother, "for

could get away with.

you say 'April Fool!'

kills you?

happens? Nothing much, is the answer.

thiness and competence. The best Scots is something like an educated Falkirk accent - sort of midway between Edinburgh's Morningside and Glasgow's Drumchapel.

There is a saying that people from east of the Pennines are, bow to put this in a politically correct fashion, rather tight Boycottish even. Charity flag day in Wakefield - empty streets; house-tohouse collection in Huddersfield - streets are packed. But if you run a telephone bank as large as First Direct's, that reputation may be turned to advantage. It has based its operation in Leeds because Yorkshire people sound as if they will look after your money.

Not all the North does well on the good phone guide. Merseyside's perennial whine is never going to make the city of Liverpool attractive, say, for belp lines. Imagine the dialogue. Broken down motorist phones belp office in Everton and has to listen to five minutes' moaning about everything from the new charges on the Wallasey tunnel to the latest fail-

ings of the Dark Blues. Accent acceptability penalises Birmingham, but no more than London. For the purposes of ingratiation with the phoning public, neither Handsworth nor Hounslow quite has it. As for Wales and Ulster, bigh scores on warmth and trustworthiness but sometimes a little back-ward in the intelligibility stakes. Directory inquiries which fetch up at the back of Belfast can be daunting when you have to spell the names of French restaurants phonetically.

people their shoelaces were undone.

Unfortunately, even this tiny trick

has been sabotaged by time - shoe

technology has moved on so fast that

hardly anyone seems to have

shoelaces in their shoes any more,

only elastic sides and Velcro fasten-

ings. And saying to people "Hey, your Velcro shoc fastening isn't

properly done upl" is less than side-

Come April Fool's Day I am now

reduced to piously hoping that

somebody somewhere is playing

some good tricks on people or that

the Guardian will come up with

another gag as good as its famous

The one great thing about April

Fool's Day is that it hasn't been com-

mercialised. Nobody has ever seen

a way of making a quick buck out of

April Fool's Day, so it basn't been

taken over by anyone in the way that

travel supplement on San Serif.

splitting somehow.

The beef scare was perfect for 1 April



• LETTERS TO THE EDITOR •

Selection of skills in schools

the very different approaches to education of Lahnur and the Conservatives ("Tories select a loser", 29 March). But Tony Mooney ("Is selection good for kids?", 29 March) claims there is a "systematic attempt" by the Tories and Labour to undermine comprehensive education.

Had Mr Mnoney read the text of my speech to the Social Market Foundation be would realise that it offered both an historical perspective on the development of comprehensive education and a programme to renew its original ideals in order to ensure that it delivers the high standards envisaged by its pioneers.

The Government's schizophrenic commitment to increasng parental choice and increasing selection will not be countered by simply claiming tbat everything is fine in the state sector. Mr Mooney extols the virtues of "setting" by ability, as I do. It should be part of a programme of renewal for comprehensive education, recognising that diversity can and should exist within schools.

DAVID BLUNKETT MP (Sheffield Brightside, Lah) House of Commons London SW1

Sir: I suggest that Sheila Lawlor reads Tony Mooney's companion piece to her own (29 March). Why do the proponents of selection and the re-introduction of the

grammar school insist on perpetuating the myth that all comprehensives have mixed-ability classes? It is clear from Tony Mooney's essay, and from my

Sir. Your leader rightly reflects experience of my two sons' com-the very different approaches to prehensive school, that "setting" and "banding" are quite common. This seems to be a much fairer way of coping with children of varying abilities than separating them by school It is, as Mr Mooney says, much easier for children to be moved from set to set than it is for them to change schools.

Mrs Marie Paterson Nuneaton, Warwickshire

Sir: Those who argue for separate schools for higher ability groups base their argument almost entirely on the premise that low performance is highly contagious. while high performance is quite the reverse. So if high perform-ers come into contact will lower performers their performance will be in danger, but the lower performers will not benefit at all from the presence of the higher performers. If high and low performers are mixed it will always result in an overall reduction in performance.

of selective schooling have the made deserts? Both of these temerity to attack the levels of groups contain gelatine, which is performance achieved in inner city schools, which are themselves the product of a highly selective, if voluntary, education process, whereby all the high performers have moved on, leaving a residue of low performers. This is the (unstated) downside of selection - the gradual debasement of standards in the nonselective schools as all the higher performers are attracted to the

MICHAEL WAODILOVE Harpenden, Hertfordshire

The military effect on lager louts

Sir: It is hard to think of anything good stemming from the abduetion, attempted rape and brutal killing of a young Danish woman in Cyprus by three drunken British soldiers.

However, that appalling affair may give pause, at least, to those who urge the return of national service as a way of giving "a taste of discipline" to those who

the card and flower people have changed Mothering Sunday into

Mother's Day, or in the way that the wrapping paper industry has taken over Christmas, the way the ehoco-

late industry has claimed Easter for

its own or the way St Valentine's Day

has been colonised by the news-

paper industry, with entire forests

being out down in Finland every year

to carry messages from Mugwumps to Duckbill Platypus. Even Guy

Fawkes' Day bas been taken over by

the harmless end of the arms trade.

undefiled, uncommercialised.

Maybe it's because it's not religious.

It's the religious feasts which seem

to attract the hordes of Mammon

most, Christmas, Easter, Whitsun, St

Valentine's Day even - all have

been prised free from the grasp of

the Church and taken over as secu-

lar and very profitable feast days. Which is only fair, because the

Christian Church stole them in the

first place, took over the people's

winter and springtime celebrations

and gave them newfangled names

based on the alleged birth and death

dates of Jesus, so industry is only

doing to the Church what the

Church had already done to some-

body else.

But April Fool's Day stands alone,

for heaven's sake!

nightly make merry and mayhem

in our town centres. The stomach-churning events of that night in Cyprus confirmed that military service does not create model citizens. Instead, in some cases, it merely converts lager louts into licentious

> MIKE BIRD Chorleywood, Hertfordshire

Not so April Fool's Day. It may be

that joke shops do better trade at the

end of March than other times of the

year, but that's small fry compared

to the Christmas shopping spree.

April Fool's Day is a gloriously take it or leave it occasion. The only great threat to April Fool's Day is the way people have started hehaving madly

on other days which are meant to

The beef scare, for example, was

Most of what Miebae I toward

says and does would only make sense on 1 April. Indeed, most of

what the entire Government does

and says is an elaborate joke,

whether they are hlaming Labour for

the Scott Report or blaming Labour

Tories have started blaming Labour

when things go wrong. Could it be,

do you suppose, that the Tories are

subconsciously so sick of being in

power that they have started behav-

ing like an opposition party already?

Is the Tory government a joke in

Do we have something to laugh at

on April Fool's Day after all?

Interesting, that, the way the

perfect for I April. Or the phenore enon of Michael Howard, th.

who never does any wrong ar

be sane.

apologises.

for the beef crisis...

Germany's worldwide success BSE: facts or opinions? Sir: Surely the most obvious lesson Germany (and France) can

Sir. In the haze of speculation about possible links between BSE and Creutzfeldt-Jakoh Disease (CJD) it is hard to distinguish fact from opinion. Dr Grant's argument (27 March), that very few BSE-exposed individuals will develop CJD because nnly those of a rare genetic constitution are susceptible, is based on conjecture. It is true that CJD may occasionally run in families. However the extremely high incidence of this disease - one in a hundred in those unfortunate children treated with contaminated human growth hormone suggests that genetic susceptibility is either of no relevance lo transmission. or if relevant is far more common than Dr Grant would have us

Dr P D LEWIS Consultant Neuropathologist London NW3

Sir: How soon will people realise There is no evidence for this at | that if beef is not safe, then nor all. Furthermore, most advocates | are most sweets and most readymade from old cattle hones. Mrs S WHEATLEY Havant, Hampshire | teach the Germans a lesson. They

Sir: Simon Calder writes (28

March) "airports are awful ...

you hang around for ages with lit-

This may once have been the

case, but there bas been a huge

advance in the quality of UK airports. Our interviewing of more

than 400,000 passengers a year

shows a continuous rise in cus-

Nor is it acceptable for Simon

Calder and Jonathan Glancey to

attack retailing at airports as if it

was an imposition on passengers.

Research shows that 90 per cent

of passengers expect and want to

see comprehensive shopping and

catering facilities at the airports -

tomer satisfaction.

High quality of British airports

næd.

selective schools.

Spending decisions for the NHS

from dialysis. Let us assume the tle to do but est uninviting food cost and survival data are correct. and spend a fortune in the shops on things you don't really want or Is this the best way to spend £20m?

> patients would each get an addi-tional year of life. By spending money on proven interventions such as improved cardiac services and GP advice to stop smoking, greater levels of health gain would be produced. Spending money on hip replacements and cataract removal would save no lives but would transform the quality of beneficiaries' lives. All spending decisions in the NHS

indeed, they want more. They understand, as well, that the income from retailing finances the £1 ma day that BAA spends on further improving airport facilities. Mr Glancey refers to a number result in less being available for other patients who could benefit of quality airports around the world but does not point out that they all have to he funded by the taxpayer. Heathrow. Gatwick, Stansted and other BAA airports, Sir: The article about metal now also of the highest quality, are-provided to the country at no

because of the retailing success. DES WILSON Director Corporate and Public Affairs BAA pic London SWI

cost to the taxpayer, not least

Sir: In answer to Jonathan Glancey's closing question: people say they like airports because when they are in one they are not cither (a) at work or (b) at home. JENNIFER C HAYTER Lancaster

Multiple Oscars

Sir: In her report on the Academy Awards ceremony (27 March) Marianne Macdonald states that the animator Nick Park is "the first Briton to win three Oscars". The composer John Barry has won four Oscars and the cameraman Freddie Young has won three.

ADRIAN TURNER London W5

Sir. Polly Toynbee may have got it wrong. She argues (25 March) it would cost £20,000 per patient resources at those patients who year to dialyse those 1,000 over 60 years of age who could benefit

learn from British economic

growth in the last two years is that

25 per cent currency devalua-

tion boosts exports and jobs (Hamish McRae; "Jobless Ger-

many can learn from us". 29

March). What a hig fall in the

Deutschmark or French franc

would do to British exports to

Europe is a question which

British ministers and supportive

Actually, the Germans are hav-

mg their kuchen and eating it.

They have huge hangover prob-

lems from absorbing the Third World communist DDR into the

Federal Republic but still manage

to have efficient industrial per-

formers based on old technology in West Germany combined with

state-of-the-art investments in East Germany. But at the same

time, they are buying up British car and other firms and banks and

opening new manufacturing plants in the US. in China and in

the Asian tigers, all busy repatri-

ating profit back to the fatherland.

Europhobes in the Cahinet and

the Conservative Party is to

smash Europe apart in order to

One answer offered by the

commentators never ponder.

This question can only be This question can only be answered with comparative data which answers the question whether there other interventions which, if given an additional £20m, would produce more health gains? By spending £20m on dialysis. 1,000 renal failure patients would each gat an additional failure patients would each gat an additional failure patients would each gat an additional failure.

Such questions need to be resolved in a rationing debate which is explicit. Just what weight do we as a society wish to give to efficiency and equity? Professor ALAN MAYNARD

dialysis?

can benefit most.

The Nuffield Provincial Hospitals Trust London W1

Scottish treasure

detecting and Sir Anthony Grant's Treasure Bill (Section Two, 27 March) neglected to mention that the law is substantially different in Scotland. Here, all objects whose original owner or rightful heir cannot be identified are Crown property and can be claimed. When the Crown exercises its ownership rights, the finder is normally rewarded with the find's full market value.

The law is used to ensure that Scotland's material culture heritage is protected for of all. The system works well, and a fruitful cooperative relationship exists between responsible metal detectorists and archaeologists - to such an extent that an exhibition at the Muscum of Antiquities in Edin-burgh features some metal detected finds. The "get rich quick" ethos does not exist here, and is rightly recognised as a chimera.

Dr Alison Sheridan Treasure Trove Advisory Panel Secretariat

TV and chips

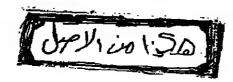
Sir: Mr Crofton-Sleigh (Letters, 28 March) wants an M-chip capahie of stiencing background music from TV programmes. But it exists already. More and more often my husband and I find ourselves forced to turn off the sound and watch with subtitles

Ardingly, West Sussex

Sir. Never mind the V-chips and M-chips (Letters, 28 March). A fortune undoubtedly awaits the entrepreneur who perfects the C chip for televised sporting events. The chip that eliminates the babbling commentator but retains the natural sounds of the oceasion - crowd noises, players' curses etc.

> NEII M. GOWAN Aspley, Nottingham

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. Fax: 0171-National Museums of 293 2056; e-mail: letters@ Scotland independent co.uk) Letters may Edinburgh be edited for tength and clarity.



residence?

But we can bope the Germans will learn lessons from Britain. In addition to a big devaluation they should of course massively reduce wages and step up part-time and temporary employment, introduce Latin American ratios of wealth and earnings, throw unions out of the workplace, step up the number of beggars in the streets and deregulate their agroindustry so as to permit the feeding of rotting sheep's brains to their cattle. As British ministers sit in their cars made by a German company I have no doubt they can think of other policies the Germans should adopt to raise their economic perfor-

(and, to my surprise, some fellow Labour MPs] appear to want

Germany to enter the 21st cen-

tury decoupled from the rest of

Europe, striding towards tomor-

row as a nation state with a

national(ist) currency. a national(ist) trade policy, and, in

due course, a national(ist)

defence policy towards a new

German destiny.

mance to the same level as that Britain. DENIS MACSHANE MP (Rotherham, Lab) House of Commons London SW1

The advocacy of sectional

interests (eg. those with chronic

renal failure) does not ensure

that the NHS produces maximum

health gains for the UK popula-

tion from its £40bn hudget. Per-

haps the NHS has got it right and

denies benefits to these patients

so it can benefit other patients

more with the marginal £20m? Perhaps the NHS should not

pursue mere efficiency hut give up achievable health gains by spending elsewhere in order to

care for needy patients in need of

Tin-rattlers in need of a shake-up

Many charities are rich, relatively unaccountable and muddled in their aims. Who will dare to take them on?

Every taxpayer docates to every corner is the animal rights lobby charity whether they like it or not, (though wisely they do not use that for tax exemption is simply state sub-sidy by another name. And yet charities are feebly policed under vague and woolly legislation. Charity Commis-sioners have remarkably little authority to ensure that charities actually do anything that is clearly beneficial.

With an anoual income of £10hn, plus £25bn assets, many of us would never willingly give to many of them (Etoo College, the Church of England?) so why does the Government do it on our behalf? But they do.

The story of the RSPCA exemplifies the strange status of these immensely rich organisations. Locally and cen-trally it has reserves of an estimated £100m and an income of some £48m a year - all to do something charity law did not originally intend: to care for

animals, not people.

A long-standing controversy about the RSPCA surfaced again last week. The charity was warned by its own lawyers that one of its campaigns (against the use of chimpanzees in medical experiments in Holland) took them beyond the curious set of laws under which they operate. The Charity Commissiooers have just sent the society a timid warning shot, "seeking clarification" on complaints raised by Sir David Steel of the Countryside

Movement, among others. The society has lost nearly half its membership over recent years. Both sides blame the other for this. In one

term). On the other side are those who think that the RSPCA should stick to welfare and rescuing pets in peril, on which it spends the bulk of its money. The rights lot think the fusty conservatism of the society has driven away members to join more radical groups such as the anti-vivisectionists and Compassion in World Farming, which (not being charities) are free of all camigning constraint. The welfare lot think good old-fashioned "caring country people" have been driven away by the anti-hunting anti-fishing anti-farming, vegetarian tone of recent years.

Both sides accuse the other of entryism, both with some justification. Recently the British Field Sports Society and its allies have been calling upon members to join the RSPCA to vote out the animal rightists on the council. On the other side, over the years there have been complaints about animal liberationists infiltrating

But who is an entryist? It all depends where the true heart and soul of the society really lies. The council member with the second-highest number of votes is Angela Walder, a vigorous vegan, who from her Arcadian Cattery on the 1ste of Sheppey hurls her defi-ance; "To hell with the Charity Commissioners!" she cries with glee. She wants to continue campaigning on Dutch chimpanzees, whatever the state of the law, She was thrown out in 1988



POLLY TOYNBEE

We no longer know what we are giving for or to whom

for bringing the society into disrepute. but now she is voted back and chairs the scientific and technical committee. Letting in anyone pro-hunting, she says, would be "like letting paedophiles into the NSPCC".

Does all this sound familiar? To veterans of the bad old days of the Labour Party, for animal rights read democratic socialism, and there you

Ideologically, the RSPCA has a deep problem, for there is no clear dividing line between where "welfare" ends and "rights" begins. Prosecuting people who are wanting cruel to pets is the easy hit. But if you happen to be a vegan, then preventing cru-

ble bottle-feeding a pet lamb she had been given. "She was in tears, really upset that it might die. Then I asked her what that smell was in the kitchen. and she said it was a leg of lamb for their Sunday funch!"

The 170-year-old RSPCA teeters along a tightrope of the exceedingly baffling charity laws, which is why it now refers everything to the Com-mission for their opinion. To be reg-istered, a charity must serve one of four purposes: religion, education, the benefit of the community or the relief of poverty. These days, both religion and education are dubious beneficiaries of the state's purse; however. note that there is no mention of benefiting animals. So how did the

RSPCA ever get registered?

Richard Fries, Chief Charity Commissioner, tries to explain, but it sounds more like theology than law: "Animals are not a charitable cause per se," he says. "But if treating animals well contributes to the ennobling and uplifting of human nature, then that is a charitable function." Ah, so in law the money someone puts in the tin is not for the battered cat but for the soul

So in what ways may the RSPCA set about ennobling us? They may take action on behalf of animals, provided it does not conflict with the interests elty includes not killing animals at all.

Angela Walder, for instance, grumbles

of human beings since humans always come first in charity law." So they can-

that she was called in the other day to not campaign against the use of chim-help a woman who was having trou-panzees in Dutch Aids experiments designed to save humans - they can only campaign for the chimpanze be kept in better conditions. The moderate welfare lobby are now trying to claim that any animal rights per-spective also breaches charity law, as

it is not for human benefit.
At this point the whole thing seems so daft that it illuminates the nonsense at the heart of charity law. They are not allowed to campaign politically, but what is "political"? Everything that matters is political and so the old con-cept of "charity" is now dead. These are big businesses with baggy rules, run by amateur boards with a lot of rela-tively unaccountable money swashing about in them. Many are riddled with fundamental contradictions about their purpose. Those charities that do social work now find their relationship with government so close that they are virtually agencies of the state.

Putting a coin in the tin, we no longer know what we are giving for or to whom, let alone why our taxes should end up as hidden subsidies for strange religions or animal groups. The Government once promised reform, but backed off in fear of these mighty vested interests: last month a new law brought only a minor tightening up of account-keeping. The charitable impulse remains strong but the whole creaking edifice needs a new set of guiding principles. Will any political

After the gloom, a lighter outlook

Andrew Brown welcomes the end of one of the worst winters for Seasonal Affective Disorder

months of frozen slush and darkness, has an unofficial name among the less respectable. In Gothenburg when I lived there it was known as Tit Day: the morning when the public transport system was transformed as all the girls went to work in T-shirts.

This was perhaps rather vul-gar but it was also a vivid expression of real deliverance from the draughty dark cellar of winter. SAD (Seasonal Affective Disorder) is now a recognised disease, striking almost everyone to a greater or lesser degree in winter; and the long grey winter we have just been through in this country has been one of the worst for it on

This January was apparently the most light-starved since records began, preceded by the tenth coldest December this century and the chilliest February for two decades. All of which has a demoralising impact on the human psyche. The weather produced record

levels of winter depression. "There might be a physiological explanation for it," says Cary Cooper, Professor of Occupational Psychology at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology. "But I think it is probably more psychological in most cases, though some people do get it very badly."

Arctic countries have long had terms for the caford of winter: "Cabin fever" and "Lapp sickness" both describe a sort of madness of distilled boredom which comes over people after months in semi-darkness with nothing to do outside. They also, have a special term for the grey season of transition between winter and spring; when the snow has receded in patches, leaving gashes of raw, frozen mud all over the lifeless earth and the icicles drip inexhaustibly without ever melting. That season of transition is when the suicide rate really

In more temperate regions, like southern England, there are likely to be less dramatic explanations for madness than the weather. Work, for instance. The high-risk sad period, from October to March, is probably the time of year when people's workload is highest;" according to Professor Cooper. "People are working longer and longer hours, getting up in the dark, going to work in the dark; and there are all sorts of reasons why it might make people feel depressed."

The first day of real spring in And now that two-thirds of all the cities of the north, after couples are both working, the impact is heightened.

It has been a vintage year for SAD on the other side of the around New York, even if everyone there is always ready to seize on the latest neurosis. they have also had a particu-larly long and unremitting sea-

son of transition this year.

The insight from America, however, is that this can often be cured by moving northwards rather than south. There may be a physiological explanation for part of this, says Professor Cooper. Most of Canada is hright with snow at the moment, and the physiological

People work longer hours, getting up and going to work in the dark

theory of SAD claims that it is the lack of light which Hence it can be treated by putting sufferers in special treatment cabinets and hissting them with artificial light made up to the frequencies of a delicious summer.

However simpler and more

mundane cures may work, too. There are other ways than going to Canada," says Professor Cooper. "Perhaps the simplest solution is to ensure that you go somewhere that there is a lot of sun." Those people with serious physiological SAD long breaks during the danger

- Any expert who prescribes winter breaks in the sun must know what he is talking about. But Professor Cooper's advice can be even more helpful than that: "I think it's about changing your lifestyle," he says. For those SAD sufferers whose condition is less acute, "it might long weekend to a nice hotel." Change is all most of us need to escape from a dull, humdrum, overloaded world, full of

If none of these methods work, then Professor Cooper, originally from Los Angeles, has an ultimate solution: send people from here to experience the changeless all-yearround summer smog of his hometown. Theo they will be thankful for an English winter. It is either that or wait for the

There may be trouble ahead

After five years of revolution in the NHS the prognosis is far from healthy, argues Nick Timmins

Anniversaries have resonance. Today's is the fifth for the Government's NHS reforms. But it is also the tenth for the financial decisions which led to 1987 to the NHS spending crisis, which in turn produced a major NHS review. In receot months, there have been some uncomfortable parallels with that period a decade ago when thousands of beds were shut, staff shortages left intensive care beds empty and a sense of crisis descended on the service and oo the public's attitude towards it. Once again for the NHS, 1996 looks likely to be another

On one level, today's news is good news. With the abolition of regions a line of sorts is being drawn under the continual, almost Maoist, revolution in organisation and structures that the service has undergone since 1991.

year of living dangerously.

It is a time that has seen some genuine gains - from transformed rela-tionships between GPs and hospitals to tumbling waiting times for non-emergency treatment. The average time on an NHS waiting list has getting on for almost halved since 1991. The very longest waits have all but disappeared.

Yet how much of this is due to the reforms? How much to the extra cash Government threw at its new system to ensure it worked? And how much to changes that were happening anyway - more day surgery, continued medical advance? Untangling all that is an impossible task. And the sense remains that another crisis may be looming. The reasons for trepidation are

threefold. First, an NHS review, set up in 1988 because of a spending crisis, ironically did nothing in the end to address the level of spending or how the NHS should be financed. It reorganised the system but not the cash. Second, a stack of problems is building, some to do with the reforms, but many not. And third, the NHS is operating in a changed dimate. All three interact. Start with the money. Several years

of generous settlements have been foltowed by a steady tightening of the screw. This winter, the NHS came closest to breakdown since 1987 as emergencies rose, the mildest of flu epidemics struck and the NHS found that the new system lacks some of the flexibility of the old. Waiting-time guarantees were honoured - hut only at the expense of not flooding the new, dedicated day surgery units with medical emergencies. The result has been some awesome waits in accident and emergency departments, patients on trolleys and a sense that the NHS is failing at the one thing it always did best: emergency care.

Compounding this is a medical staffing crisis which may be the single most serious issue facing the service. There are a number of reasons for this. A miscalculation over medical school



numbers back in the 1980s; more women doctors opting to work parttime; cuts in junior doctors' hours; and a dramatic re-working of consultant training-all have combined to produce both painful new pressures to reorganise hospital services and shortages of medical staff. In a further echo of the 1987 crisis, there are also shortages of intensive care nurses. These will require more organisational change within hospitals, but need money and finan-cial flexibility to ease them through.

Yet in key areas the service has actually lost, rather than gained, financial flexibility. The growth of fundholding has reduced health authorities' ability to switch spending between waiting lists and emergency care — a situation that will intensify as the range of procedures which GP fundholders can buy increases significantly from today. It has become harder to swap capital spending for revenue and vice versa. This makes tackling the difficulties outlined above, and exercising one of the NHS's greatest arts - simply muddling through - more difficult. And the much-vaunted private finance initiative has yet to help. It has delayed not only big building but smaller rationalisations, while producing a large cut in capital spend-

ing that it has yet to replace. Finally, there is no back pocket. As has become clear as Stephen Dorrell

has announced initiatives to tackle a series of crises - mental health, intensive care beds, accident and emergency staffing - there has been no hid-den cash, held back, to lubricate these changes. And there still won't be any this financial year. For despite an election drawing near, and in an echo of 1987, the Government has produced for the NHS the toughest year financially

It is an explosive mixture ... and an eruption could match the dark days of 1987

since the reforms came in - after a year in which it has run tight as a drawstring. Meanwhile, the service is operating in a changed climate. The purchase provider split has made more explicit the decisions about rationing and pri-orities that were always made, but usually made quictly, behind closed doors. The sense that the NHS is less comprehensive than it was is growing. And the private sector - in the shape of the pharmaceutical companies and the private insurers - is circling. Both have a vested interest in more private spending. The health insurers, faced with minimal growth since the 1990 recession, have become more aggressive, and in some cases less honest, in their marketing. In part that reflects increased competition as nontraditional health insurers such as Norwich Union have moved in. But h also reflects a change of personnel at the top. The gentlemen who ran the tradi-

tional insurers such as Bupa and PPP, and who were broadly happy to live in a quiet symbiosis with the NHS, have been replaced by a younger and more aggressive breed, prepared to argue more openly the case for more private spending. The result - reflected in projects like the drug-industry sponsored Healthcare 2000 - is a louder argument that only private spending can close the gap between demand and resources: an argument with which other countries (with higher private health care spending than the UK but similar problems

over rationing) might not agree. On top of that, the reforms have helped to silence many of the tradi-tional voices calling for more money for the NHS. Health authorities - stripped of professional and local authority pressure groups - oow manage the cash they are given rather than making the case for more. Managers, likewise, now manage rather than agitate. The British Medical Association and the

Royal College of Nursing have both heen marginalised. And even some of the health service academics, anxious to appear modern in a climate where advocating more public spending is seen as old-fashioned, have joined the argument that the NHS may oeed to charge more, or provide a "core" service, or shift in some more dramatic way away from its tradition as a taxfunded, free-at-the-point of use service despite having no prescription to offer as to how to achieve that with equity.

The case for more NHS spending is thus going by default with no chance that the Labour Party, terrified of any charge of tax and spend, will rectify it: certainly not this side of an election, and quite possibly not the other.

An explosive mixture is in the mak-

ing. A mixture of long-term trends, short-term crises, some effects of the NHS reforms but, most immediately, an excessive tightening of the spend ing screw may next winter produce an eruption in the NHS to match the dark days of 1987: a bitter irony when in many ways the service is performing as well, if oot better, than before, Such an explosion would raise again

the question that the outcome of the NHS review ducked. How much should we spend on the NHS, and should we spend it publicly? The answer this time might be different.

Her fourth birthday may well be her last, but she isn't ill She's poor before their lifth birthday. The diseases they suffer from differ But the cause is almost always the same. ACTIONAIO is working in some of the poorest areas of the world to end this cycle of despeit Helping local communities to provide clean water, education, health, nutrition, food production and a means to generate their OWN Income. Sponsor a child like Nyana and you'll be helping her her family and her whole community A photograph and In the more secular 20th century, the agular reports keep you in touch. You will receive massages from the child and can write if you wish. By becoming a sponsor you'll make all the difference to the life of a child like Nyana. Please sponsor a child teday. ☐ Asia O White Expels greated non or a child most, but employees gift etc. ⊕550 025 () Exce E CONNECTIONALD, and send to: ACTIONALD, FREEPOST, Chard.

In 1866, cattle plague was seen as a sign from God. Matthew Cragoe looks at the ensuing spiritual crisis

Ipswich and Canterbury, even in Lon-

doo itself, businesses closed and peo-

ple hurried to the Services. The hope

children. As one Herefordshire

church warden remarked, he wanted

Cattle plagues in this country are nothing new. Exactly 130 years ago, in the early months of 1866, the nation was gripped by panic as rinderpest cut a deadly swathe through the kingdom's horned population. Within eight months, three times as many cattle had died from the disease as did all the human beings claimed by the cholera outhreak around the same time.

The affect upon counties like Cheshire, the dairying capital of England, was catastrophic: approximately 140,000 of 200,000 head of cattle in the county were either killed by the disease or compulsorily slaughtered when suspected of carrying it.

A crisis of these dimensions naturally raised serious questions, What was responsible for the disease?

Sick cows and the Archbishop

Why had it been sent? In seeking answers, the Victorians turned not only to science, but also to religion.

In the middle of the last cootury, people inhabited a world still deliberately constructed by an omniscient Creator. Thus it seemed perfectly natural that the government should ask The Archhishop of Canterbury to compose a prayer "For Relief from the Plague now existing amongst Cattle", even as it set in train a scientific investigation. The prayer was read in all churches for the duration of the outbreak.

Six months later, wheo science had

of those who attended was not simply relief from the plague, but enlightenment as to its moral dimensions. The cattle plague was interpreted part of a cootioning dialogue etween the Almighty and His fallen

still not found an answer, the Church to know "whether in this AD 1866, the went a step further, and appointed Almighty dealt with His people as He public "Days of Humiliation" where a proper display of communal penidid with the Israelites of old". tence could be made. In towns like

People also wanted to know why God had choseo to afflict the cattle. What message was it intended to convey? Here, many answers were forthcoming. Dean Close, in Carlisle, identified the vice of drunkenness as the one "more especially calculated to provoke the Divine displeasure". In Birmingham, Dr Miller blamed oooobservance of The Sabbath. Within weeks of the churches in England sending up their prayers, the cattle plague also hegan to abate.

connection between prayer and miraculous intervention seems more tenuous. Yet as a community, we have indulged in considerable public soulsearching as we seek to develop a moral framework within which to understand BSE. And while few might identify drunkenness or non-observance of the Sabbath as the chief causes of our plight, good old-fashiooed sins such as greed and love of lucre have been frequently highlighted. Perhaps in 1996, as in 1866, to quote the Archbishop of Canterbury. worthily deserve by chastisement, and our Sin is ever before us".

The writer is senior lecturer in British History at the University of Hertford-

Gyula Kállai, the Hungarian Communist politician, was one of the most senior officials to help János Kádár, the party leader, restore and consolidate Communist rule in Hungary after the 1956 uprising.

Born into the obscurity and poverty of village life in the final years of the Austro-Hungarian empire, during the Communist era he rose through the party ranks to become prime minister in the mid-1960s, only to be moved out of that job when Kádár decided to pursue a more reformist policy. Thereafter, he was gradually eased out of the leadership, though he retained a number of largely bonorific posts right up to the collapse of the old Com-munist establishment in 1989.

Kállai was born in southcast Hungary in 1910, one of seven children of a shoemaker. It was bardly an auspicious start. either for making a successful career or for adopting Marxist-Leninist views. Kallai recalls in his memoirs his teachers' asking when he misbebaved in school: "Where on earth do you think you are, in Moscow?

Unlike many of Hungary's Communist leaders who did find refuge in Moscow in the 1930s and then became obedient servants to Stalin's every whim, the young Kallai who had joined the tiny and then illegal Communist movement in 1931 remained in Hungary. He enrolled at university in Budapest. studying Hungarian and Latin; a remarkable feat at the time barely 1 per cent of college students were the children of peasants or the rural poor.

Kállai became a journalist, a profession well-suited to propagating the Communist cause through left-wing publications. especially after the mid-1930s when Moscow had decreed cooperation with other left-ofcentre parties, In Hungary, where the Communist Party remained banned, this meant work in other organisations. Kállai became a successful practitioner of this policy of entryism when he joined the Social Democratic Party's newspaper. Nepsznva, without his colleagues realising that he was a card-carrying member of the Communist Party.

Though he was involved in the anti-war and anti-German movements, Kállai escaped arrest, except for a hrief period of detention in 1942. After the Second World War, he was well-placed for promotion in the increasingly Communistdominated coalition governments that ruled Hungary until one-party dictatorship was imposed in 1948. His extensive mocrats and with the Populist movement of rural, left-wing nationalist intellectuals helped him to senior posts in the information, propaganda and culture departments in his own party and in the government.

But as the paranoia of Mátyas Rákosi, Hungary's Stalinist ruler, began to extend from real and imagined political enemies in other parties to decimate the ranks of the Communist leadership itself, Kallai's strengths became the vehicle for his temporary undoing.

After serving two years as for-eign minister, in 1951 he was arrested along with other senior officals and charged with antistate activities. As with his fcilow defendants, Kallai's only crime was to have started and remained a home-grown Communist - a group distrusted by the so-called Muscovites, led by

Stalin's gaze. His contacts with Hungary's non-Communist leftwing movements hefore and during the war now became proof of treason in the eyes of

the Stalinist leadership. Kállai spent three years in prison before being released in 1954 during the thaw that fol-lowed Stalin's death. Unlike many of his colleagues for whom their trial and imprisonment on trumped-up charges had become the inspiration to struggle for a root-and-branch reform of the Communist system, Kállai emerged from gaol blaming not the regime as a whole but only the errors of its leaders. He moved back into cultural administration, working as deputy minister of education and then as minister after the 1956 pro-democracy

With the uprising crushed by Soviet tanks, Kaltai joined the small band of leaders around Kadar who began to restore Communist rule in the country. If Kadar was not impressed by Kallai's abilities, he had few people to choose from. He was reluctant to take on too many Stalinists from the discredited



Kallai; combined the thinking of an educated Marxist with the shrewdness of a peasant

regime that had provoked the revolution; but the Communist reformers around Imre Nagy, the prime minister during the uprising, were not prepared to collaborate with him. While Nagy and his closest

colleagues were interned in Romania, Kádár dispatched contacts with the Social Detempt to try to drive a wedge between them and get some of them to collaborate. Kállai's role as Kádár's negotiator - and his campaign to blacken the reputation of Nagy and his friends - turned him into a hated figure among those who cherished the memory of 1956. They could not forgive bim - a long-standing friend known to them as "Gyufa" (matchstick) who had been a fellow victim of both the wartime right-wing regime and the Stalinist dictatorship - for abandoning them to stay in power.

But Kallai's colleagues in the Kádár era saw a different side of his personality. As he rose to become first deputy prime minister in 1960 and then prime minister in 1965, they regarded him as one of the relatively deceot administrators of Communism. At cabinet meetings he was not domi-

Rákosi, who had spent long pc-riods in the Soviel Union under his ministers' departmental responsibilities; and he combined the thinking of an educated, though dogmatic, Marxist with the cautious shrewdness of a

Ultimate power, though, was not in the hands of the government but of the Communist Party, renamed the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party (HSWP) by Kádár in 1956, who remained in control of Hungarian political life until the late 1980s. And although he had to relinquish the post of prime minister to Kállai in 1965, this was largely in response to Moscow's requirements at a time when the post-Khrushchev leadership decreed that the posts of party leader and prime minister should be separated.

The appointment of Kállai more unquestioningly loyal to the Kremlin than Kádár - as prime minister was a sensible choice for Kádár. He was about to embark on far-reaching economic reforms and it was crucial to reassure Moscow that the Communists would not lose controt over a less highly regulated economy and society

However, oo the eve of the introduction of the reforms, which started at the beginning of 1968. Kádár needed to replace Kállai with an economist who had reformist credentials. In 1967 be was replaced as prime minister by Jenő Fock and shunted off to become Speaker of the National Assembly. Meeting four times a year for one or for two days, this was a rubber-stamp body; Kallai's influence was on the wane.

He was removed from the HSWP's policy-making Polit-buro in 1975 for no particular reason other than that Kadar had been forced by pressure from an increasingly inflexible Soviet leadership to sack some prominent reformers; and to show the Hungarian public that this was not the end of the more liberal economic policies, be also ousted some more hardline politicians, such as Kállai.

Out of the centre of power, Kállai retained a seat on the HSWP's "Parliament", the central committee, until that body was disbanded when the HSWI was replaced by a Westernstyle social democratic party in 1989. Meanwhile, Kállai's in tense loyalty to - and fear of -Moscow had remained. In the early 1980s he was one of only two members of the over 100strong central committee to oppose the leadership's decision to apply for membership of the International Monetary Fund without first consulting Kailai to meet them in an at- Moscow - which was an unprecedented act of independence by Hungary at the time.

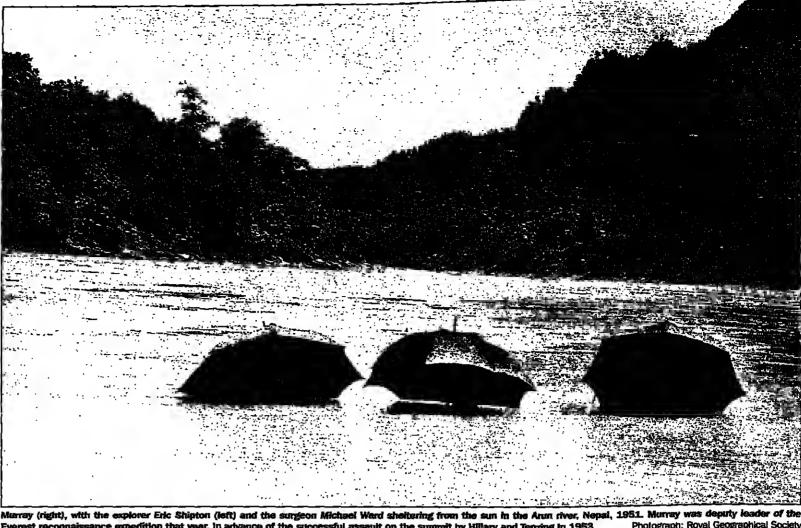
Kállai disappeared from the Hungarian political scene after the collapse of Communism in 1989. In his final years be did not become an embittered opponent of the new democratic regime: in private he accepted Hungary's transformation as a fact of political life. He and his family shunned the media to such as extent that even his death was announced with a week's delay after the funeral had taken place.

Gabriel Partos

Gyula Kallai, politician: born Berettyoujfalu, Hungary 1 June 1910; Prime Minister of Hungary 1965-67, member of the HSWP Polithur 1965-75, Speaker of the National Assembly 1967-71; married Gabriella Alnoch (two daughters); died Budapest 12 March 1996.

writer, 1697; Prince Otto Eduard

eopold von Bismarck, statesman.



ince expedition that year, in advance of the successful assault on the summit by Hillary and Tenzing in 1953

W. H. Murray

W. H. Murray was a mountaineer, an author and a soldier. The three strands of a full life were deeply intertwined; Murray will probably be best remembered for the ice climbs be made in his native Scotland more than 60 years ago which set the stage for the publication of two books about Britain's high places. His Mountaineering in Scotland (1947) and Undiscovered Scotland (1951) bave an honoured place on the bookshelves of many enthusiasts.

The challenging winter climbs marked him out in the mountaineering world as a pi-oneer. But what prompted Murray to write has a genesis far removed from the Scottish mountains - to a time and a

place ruled by sand and beat rather than scree and cold. The Western Desert was a Second World War battleground for nearly three years before the Allied forces ex-

pelled the Axis from North Africa. In June 1942 Rommel's Panzers bad Cairo in their sights and were riding high. Early in the war Murray had enlisted in the Highland Light Infantry, at Maryhill Barracks, Glasgow. He was posted to the Middle East and after the fall of Tobruk in June 1942 German tanks fell on the survivors of his badly mauled unit. The twopounder anti-tank shots bounced off the formidable Panzers like golfballs, confirming the British gun's nickname

of "pea-shooter". Murray was taken prisoner by a German tank commander who turned out to be a mountaineer. He was given a greatcoat and food and sent to the rear to begin three years behind barbed wire.

Incarcerated first in Italy, along with thousands of other prisoners of war be was taken to Germany when the Italians abandoned the struggle in 1943. Inactivity was a severe trial for someone so active. Murray began writing to lessen the numbing routine. Paper was in short supply so he used Red Cross lavatory rolls for a first draft, which was confiscated by a German officer who, unlike the Afrika Korps tank commander who captured him, bad

little time for mountains. A second draft was completed by the time the camps were liberated in May 1945 and two years later Mountaineering in Scotland was published.

Incarceration left its mark on many PoWs, but Bill Murray continued the activity he loved and in 1950 led expeditions to Garhwal and Almora in the Himalayas. He was deputy leader on the reconnaissance of Everest in 1951, but difficulties in acclimatising to the altitude excluded him from the successful assault by Edmund Hillary and Sherpa Tenzing on the world's highest peak in 1953.

In later life be wrote extensively - guidebooks, works of topography, magazine articles and fiction. He was awarded the Mungo Park Medal of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society in 1953, and appointed OBE in 1966.

Tony Beath

William Hutchison Murray, mountaineer, writer, soldier: born Liverpool 18 March 1913; OBE 1966; books include Mountaineering in Scotland 1947, Undiscovered Scotland 1951, The Story of Everest 1953, Highland Landscape 1962, The Hebrides 1966, Companion Guide to the West Highlands of Scotland 1968, The Curling Companion 1981, Rob Roy MacGregor 1982; married; died 19 March 1996.

McWelling Todman

Islands - and most island peoplc - do not take kindly to dis-tinguished difference, let alone quiet eminence, from among their resident number. Caribbean island people, anyway. Put heself up an' dey will pull he down.

There can be exceptions. McWelling Todman was one. It is not often in such societies that you find a man who eschews family antagonisms and rivalries, who is trusted and listened to with respect by all political groupings and by civil servants. No one in the British Virgin Islands, or in the



Todman began his adult life as a teacher in the high noon of colonialism. He learnt in the classroom to assemble his material and to deliver it to his first critical listeners with clarity and persuasiveness. If he never mapped the destiny of the life of his island peo-

Caribbean as a whole, ever pull

ple, Todaran certainly helped to shape it. He was a background confidant and trusted unofficial adviser to more than one Chief Minister of the territory. He was also a regular lay preacher, who filled the pews at the Road Town Methodist

Church. "Mac Todman is preaching on Sunday," my Finance Ministry colleague and now the choirmaster would say. You should come." Todman's words could come sbooting out from the pulpit as from a machine-gun, peppering

the congregation with intellectual conviction and passion. It was not fire-and-brimstone stuff, though; nor judgemental evangelism. On one occasion he roasted West Indian men for their marital infidelities and irresponsibility; but be did so with a smile on his face.

In 1967 Todman, who had been called to the Bar in London at Gray's Inn, set up his own practice in Tortola. More than 20 barristers have followed; but he was the first BV Islander

to do so. Before that, he had varying administrative experience in the BVI and in Antigua before moving in 1957 to Barbados and then Trinidad on the founding staff of the embryonbut stillborn Federal Government of the West Indies. In the early 1980s, the tiny

on the improbable task of renegotiating its on-notice double taxation treaty with the United States. Powerful forces were wheeled in at the US Treasury in Washington. The BVI delegation there was headed by Chief Minister Lavity Stoutt. The only other BV Islander was Todman, by now a QC; the rest were white expatriates. During months of protracted negotiations, Todman's voice within the delegation was often decisive on tricky issues with local implications and significance.

British Virgin Islands embarked

Todman was an avid reader. He seemed to have a new book for each flight - from George Orwell to V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie to Martin Luther King. Latterly, it might have been Nelson Mandela or perhaps Colin Powell. The buman condition. from a West Indian perspective, was his constant innermost preoccupation.

A Fiscal Review held by the

government in 1981 was a major exercise in pointing the way forward for the tax structure and economy of the territory. Tourist promotion was in its infanthe BVI as a significant offshore finance centre was no more than a dream. Annual budgetary grant-in-aid dependence on Britain was too recent to be a comfortable memory: and foreign capital investment was spasmodic and illmanaged. There were informal moves to introduce what amounted to a capital gains tax on tales of land between nonbelongers (foreigners). Todman's view, which the committee endorsed, was that such action would be contrary to the philosophy on which the fiscal sector of the BVI economy was based and could do serious damage to the govern-ment's efforts to huild up the BVI as a low-tax regime and an

offshore base for legitimate

and properly administered commercial undertakings. Throughout the Eighties, there was a fierce debate about the conditions under which non-belongers should be permitted to come and work in the BVL As always, Todman's views were clear; the interests of the BVI came first. The government had an inalienable right, indeed obligation, to decide which noubelongers should be permitted to carry on business, including the practice of his own law profession, in the territory.

Todman never sought authoritative power for blmselfand this was the key to the trust which he engendered and enjoyed in the community. Further, he never asked to be paid for his public services to governments and people.

Kenneth Bain

McWelling Todman, lawyer and public servant: born Tortola, British Virgin Islands 25 December 1923; chairman, B17 Public Service Commission 1970-94: OBE 1970, CBE 1988; OC 1980: married 1952 Audrey Creaue (one son, one daughter and one son deceased): died 7 March 1996.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

IN MEMORIAM

BRADLEY: Affred, 1925-91. With love on this, the fifth anniversary, from Ju-dith, Jeremy, Simon, Petra, Alison, Jonathan and Rachel.

Announcements for Gazette AIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS should be sent to writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, I Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephoned to whart, London E14 5DL, (elephoned to 0171-293 2011 or fazed to 0171-293 2010, und are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT ex-tral. OTHER Gazette nanouncements must be submitted in writing for faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. They should be accompanied by a daytime telephone number.

Wills

Sir William Godfrey Agnew, of South Ascot, Berkshire, former Clerk of the Privy Council, left estate valued at £1,177,425 net. He left £1,000 to the Royal Star and Garter Home, Rich-

Mr Charles Watson Warrell, of Matlock, Derbyshire, creator of the I-Stry books, left estate valued at £287,241

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS The Duke of Kent, President, attends the exhibition "Together; the Communicalith in War", at the Imperial War Museum,

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regi-ment mounts the Oueen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, (Tam; 1st Battalion Welsh Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckinghum Palace, 11,30am, band pra-vided by the Scots Guards.

Birthdays Mr George Baker, actor and writer, 65: Mr Cynog Dalis MP, 58: Mr David Davies, chairman and chief executive, Johnson Matthey, 56; The Rev Nor-man Drummond, Scottish Governor, BBC, and Chairman. Broadcasting Couocil for Scotland, 44; Mr Alex Falconer, MEP, 56; Professor Roderick Floud, Provost, London Guild-hall University, 54; Sir Anthony Gill, chairman, Docklands Light Railway, 66; Mr David Gower, cricketer, 39: Sir Nicholas Heoderson, former diplomat. 77; Miss Gaic Johnson Houghton, jockey, 55; The Earl of tichester, managing director, County Border Newspapers, 76: Baroness McFarlane of Llandaff, Professor Emeritus, Department of Nursing, Manchester University, 70; Professor Maxwell McGlashan, ebemist, 72; Miss Ali MacGraw, film actress, 58; Sir William Macpherson of Cluny, High Court judge, 70; Mr William Manchester, author and history professor, 74; Maj-Gen Giles Mills, for mer resident Governor, Tower of London, 74; Professor Sir Dimitri Obolensky, historian, 78; Mrs Marie Panerson, former TUC president, 62; Miss Jane Powell, singer and actress, 67: Mr Charles H. Price, former US ambassador to the UK, 65; Mr Steve Race, musician and broadcaster, 75; Dr Richard Repp, Master of St Cross College, Oxford, 60; Miss Debbie Reynolds, actress, 64; Mr Bryan Robertson, author, historian and broadcaster, 71; Mr Arnold Sidebottom, cricketer. 42; Mr Leonard van Geest, chairman, Littiewoods, 46; Mr Dafydd Wigley MP, 53.

Anniversaries Births: William Harvey, physician, discoverer of the circulation of the blood, 1578; Abbé Provosi

1815: Edwin Austin Abbey, painler, 1852; Ferruccio Benvenuto Busoni, ian, 1866: Sergei Vasilievich Rachmaninov, composer, 1873; Edgar Richard Horatio Wallace. journalist and thriller writer, 1875; Lon (Alonso) Chaney, actor, 1883; Wallace Beery, actor, 1885; Clementine Ogilvy, Baroness Spencer-Churchill, widow of Sir Winston Churchill, 1885; Leonard Bloomfield. linguist, 1887; Dame Cicely Court-oeidge, actress, 1893. Deaths: Eleanor of Aquitaine, Queeo of France and of England, 1204; Robert III, King of Scotland, 1406; Dr John Langhome, writer, cleric and translator, 1779; Dr Isaac Milner, theologian and mathematician, 1820; Chester Harding, portrait painter, 1866; John Frederick Denison Maurice. theologian and founder of Christian Socialism, 1872: Ex-Emperor Karl Franz Josef of Austria, 1922; Mortimer Mempes, painter and etcher, 1958; John Atkinson Hobson, economist, 1940; Lev Davidovich Landau, physicist, 1968; Max Ernst, Surrealist painter and sculp-tor, 1976; Rece Curforth, journalist and broadcaster, 1984; Elizabeth de Beauchamp Goudge, author, 1984. On this day: the telephone link be-tween London and Paris was officially opened, 1891; the Territorial Army was founded, 1908; old age pensions were first paid (to British subjects over the age of 70), 1909; the first aviation unit of the British army was formed, the Air Battalion, Royal Engineers 1911; the Royal Air Force came into being, 1918; Adolf Hitler

was sentenced to five years' impris-

oument, 1924; a Hebrew university

was inaugurated by Lord Balfour on

Mouni Scopus, Jerusalem, 1925;

persecution of the Jews in Germany

xegan, 1933; London's Green Beli

legislation came into being, 1935;

both private and municipal, were na-tionalised as the British Electricity Authority, 1947; Newfoundland, up to this date a separate Dominion, be-came the 10th province of Canada. 1949; the world's first meteorologi-cal satellite was launched, *Tiros 1* 1960: 590 US prisoners were released by the North Vietnamese, 1973: Pur-chase Tax and Selective Employment Tax were abolished in Britain, and Value Added Tax (VAT) took their place, 1973; boundary changes were made in England and Wales, affect-ing all counties, 1974. Today is the st Day of St Catharine of Palma. St Gilbert of Caithness, St Hugh of Bonnevaux, St Hugh of Grenoble, St Macarius the Wooderworker, Si Melito and St Valery or Walaricus.

Dinners

71st Yeomanry Signat Regimen The Earl of Limerick, Honorary Colonel, and officers of the 71st Yeo manry Signal Regiment, dined out Li-Cot S.P. Foakes, Commanding Officer, on Saturday evening in the Officers' Mess, Longmoor. Major W.S. Sampson presided. Among those present were:

gadier J.E. Necve; Brigadier (Reid) C.A. 1911; Col Sir Daval Black Bt; Col A.P. Verey.

Mahar Regiment

The Annual Reunion Dinner of the Mahar Regiment was held on Saturday evening at the Mill House Hotel, Ashington, West Sussex. Major E. Stanley-Jones presided. Lt-Col Peter Middleton was the speaker.

St Antony's College, Oxford

The following have been elected to Honorary Fellowships of St Antony's College, Oxford: Mrs Monna Besse: Lord Bullock: Professor W. Roger Louis; Professor Sarvepalli Gopal.

The powerful silences of Holy Week

Advent is a time of expectation and anticipation. Lent is a time of preparation and promise. Yet, for me, Lent is a time of apprehension - and Holy Week the days when apprehension reaches a climax. I may not be alone in feeling that Lent, like autumn, is my natural habitat. 1 am drawn to the dark, the austere, and the wistful. I find the sunset at the close of day more appealing than the sunrise. I am more at home in moorland than in tropics, and I am moved by music in a minor key. And I am, for reasons I do not fully understand, a sceptic. There are no role models in the Gospels

for women of doubt - the women there found healing and strength in simply touching the hem of Jesus' garment, and they sat at his feet to receive his teachings. They waited at the foot of the Cross during his agonising death, and to one of them he was revealed on Easter morning. Where is the woman with whom I can identify, a woman who is a kindred spirit in doubt?

I feel a strong affinity with the disciples who deserted Jesus at the time of his arrest because he did not fulfil their expectations. He did not live up to their idea of a Messiah or Saviour, so they in turn were overcome by the fear of what would be demanded of them. I am married to someone whose vocation gives people expectations of me. Because of my gender and country of birth, people have expectations of me, and make assumptions. The people I counsel bave expectations of my counselling skills. All this should strengthen me, but sometimes makes me weak.

In my work as a bereavement counsellor I must stay with the dark and pain of

Arguments DE Easter

All through Holy Week we will be running a series of Easter meditations: this, the first, is by Jean Holloway, a bereavement counsellor whose husband, Richard, is Bishop of Edinburgh.

my clients, or I am of no use to them. A grieving woman told me of the dark which surrounds ber, and when I asked if she saw any light at all, she replied that the only glimmer of light was her own death. And yet I believe she will find some door to the future edge open, or some hope to give ber enough light to see her way ahead. I will then leave her to make her own way. My work ends when her way ahead becomes possible, and then I will see another person for whom bereavement makes the future unthinkable. But I cannot lead a light, or force the door. I can only be alongside in the dark until the memories become bearable and the future can be contemplated.

I was impressed by the response to the Dunblane tragedy, when many admitted that silence was the only appropriate response. Yet one Dunblane woman appalled me. She said in a radio interview: 'People's memories are short. We will get back to normal life." She repeated this, but she was twice wrong. People have memories which last a lifetime, and in old

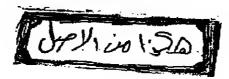
age it is the recent memories which fade. while the distant ones become more vivid. Jews do not forget the Holocaust, the people of Aberfan do not forget their children, and the parents and people of

Dunblanc will not forget 13 March.

And yet, it is Holy Week in all its sombre and reflective time that draws me back. again and again - the reverse of the moth to the flame, for it is the darkness that I feel is real, and in which meaning is to be found. It is the silence of Holy Week rather than the shouts of alleluia that is so powerful. The valley of the shadow of death stretching between Hosannas and Alleluias, speaks to all people. Death is an mescapable experience, and whatever is on the other side of death will come to all, whether believing or sceptical.

So my apprehension at this time of year is due to the knowledge that at dawn on Easter Sunday there will be rejoicing, hut that I will feel I am on the margins, I will open myself to the message that death is conquered and that the world should reioice. And I will be glad for those for whom this message transforms life and death.

It might seen from the foregoing that 1 am verging on clinical depression or melancholia, but I experience great joy in the things of this world. I revel in heauty, and I delight in the incongruous and the absurd. I am constantly grateful for my eyesight and hearing through which profoundly uplifting experiences can be received, and for love and laughter and life. But Holy Week is a time when I reach into depths of meaning confront the momentous mysteries of life and death, and feel the enormous paradux of being utterly alone and at one with all who live and die.



Caution expected as a nervous market waits for takeover action

As takeover action goes it does not come much heavier than Power and PowerGen hids for Lahour approach if it does BT and Cable & Wireless; if distributors Southern Electric win power are bound to colour talks are successful it could and Midlands Electricity. create a £35bn deal, far bigger than anything the stock market has experienced.

It could, therefore, be argued the market has got the deal it so desperately wanted and shares should move ahead.

chance of dramatic progress vestment house, has said NP this week. The long Easter holiday will prompt a cautious approach and the end of the fi
vestment house, has said NP and PG shares are at least 3tt per cent undervalued.

Last week the market put and the end of the fi
vestment house, has said NP and PG shares are at least 3tt per cent undervalued.

Last week the market put and the end of the fi
vestment house, has said NP unpsurge is likely to leave little impression. US payroll figures. due next week, recently caused weight and defensive position. nancial year, whilst possibly encouraging a deluge of tax effective bed-and-breakfast deals, will merely produce a

little window dressing activity. The BT/Cable talks face a multitude of hurdles and are given no more than a 75 per cent chance of succeeding.

But two big deals bover.

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It is widely expected that the proposed deals will be cleared. If, however, the hids are hlocked the two cash-rich generators are expected to embark on share buy-back programmes ful omens. hares should move ahead. and pay special dividends.
But there is not much Salomon Brothers, the US in-

> Last week the market put on a pretty uninspiring display, despile growing rumours of ex-tensive corporate action. The time will be postponed until affailure of the "good to talk" ne-ter Easter. gotiations to set shares alight stems from the growing political nature of the market.

A slampede to get corporate action completed before there is any danger of a Labour gov-This week, or next, the Monopolies and Mergers Com-This week, or next, the Monopolies and Mergers Commission should produce its mission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should produce its make a market and Societe commission should be commission.

sentiment.

Another indication of the more nervous nature of the market is its willingness to be influenced by bad news and pay little attention to more cheer-

due next week, recently caused alarm and despondency. Still, as they will not be published un-

Goldman Sachs, the US investment house, cites political influences as one of the reasons for its bearish stance. It thinks the market has peaked and reduced its Footsie forecast for

STOCK MARKET WEEK

DEREK PAIN Stock market reporter

of the year

a classic bear market phase - much more positive. Its Footsie where prices fall over time, forecast is 4,150 to 4,250 for For example, a New York even though the market is up slump will hit shares but an more days than it is down - and 4,000-plus at the end of the year.

> Increasing gilt yields and uncertain company profits also worry Goldman, which adds: "Political risk is likely to be increasingly priced into the market as funds go underweight in the UK, preferring foreign equity markets."
> Goldman's longer term
> Footsie forecast – covering 12-

June and it is shooting for

Since peaking at 3,781.3 in February, Footsic has moved narrowly. The supporting index, covering the 250 shares outside the blue-chip club, has, however, picked up a strong head of steam. They closed at another record high on Friday. If there are any shocks next

week the market should be able to tap into a drop of the hard stuff to steady its nerves. On Monday, Macallan Glen-livet, the famous malt whisky But it takes many views to make a market and Societe producer, reports, followed by The Highland Distilleries Co

the investment house with a £107.2m. strong north-of-the-Border influence, sees MacGlen producing a year's figure of £7.58m against £6.69m and Highland. the Famous Grouse group, making interim profits of £24.8m. up from £23.7m. The two whisky houses have close try's trading climate has per cent of the shares.

links with Remy Cointreau, the French brandy and champagne group. Big guns reporting this week 1100 include Burmah Castrol (today) and Tarmac (tomorrow). Burmah's quoted Indian off-

Excellent figures from shoot in February have encouraged the market to look for around £250m. up from £219.5m.

Tarmac, following its assets exchange with George Wimpey, is now a pure aggregates' construction hybrid. Williams

Although the world whisky de Broe expects profits of market remains weak, the £97m before losses on a con-Scotch double should manage struction contract. Last year the progress. NatWest Securities, group achieved profits of

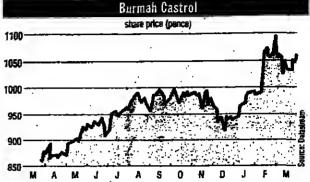
Alfred McAlpine is another huilder featuring in this week's diary. It reports on Thursday when a little changed £10.5m

is the expectation. Friendly Hotels is scheduled for Thursday. The indus-

improved quite significantly, with even the struggling Queens Moat Houses making a much better showing than

many expected last week. The group should have shared in the revival and Greig Middleton is forecasting

£4.34m, up from £3.65m. Friendly is the third quoted creation by veteran hotelier Henry Edwards, who has 8.65



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E INDEPENDENT • Monday 1 April 1996

BT backs Germans to buy Mercury

MAGNUS GRIMOND

Deutsche Telekom, the giant German telecoms group, is British Telecommunications' preferred buyer for Mercury Communications, the UK's second-higgest telephone company, following any merger with Cahle & Wireless, Mercury's

BT believes that bringing in Deutsche, which is to be privatised later this year, would open up the British telephones market to reat competition for the first time. It would also ease the pressure from the regulator. Oftel, which has caused BT's recent share price to underperform the market drastically.

The Mercury sell-off, along with the disposal of C&W's

by government competition rules, if a merger goes ahead. But BT, to which Peter Bonfield of ICL recently moved to become chief executive, will be in a strong position to dictate terms if a £35bn merger with C&W can be consummated. The Government is said to have given "more than a nod and a wink" to the deal as part of a desire to have a strong UK champion in the telecommunications industry.

Observers say it is ready to use its golden share to block any foreign takeover of C&W, which is putting pressure on the group to reach agreement with BT.

Adding to that pressure is the continued failure of C&W to find a new chief executive. The group, which has been rudderless since both its former chair-



lined up an American to fill the top executive post, but he will not move until the outcome of the merger talks is clear.

The sale of Mercury to Deutsche would give the British group a well capitalised parent which, like BT, is having to Mercury One-2-One mobile man, Lord Young, and chief telephones operations, will almost certainly be forced on BT man, Lord Young, and chief make a rapid transformation make a rapid transformation from state-owned to private privatisation and in the course of many discussions the subject

which is due to float in a £7bn privatisation later this year, has been interested in picking up Mercury for some time. BT's chairman, Sir Iain Vallance, maintained close links with Hel-mut Ricke, the German group's chairman until his resignation in

of a possible deal between BT and C&W was raised, leading to Deutsche's initial interest in Mercury.

The possibility was revived last year when a BT executive made a courtesy call on Deutsche in December, and again within the past fortnight.

But Deutsche will not have the field all to itself. AT&T, the



US telecoms giant, and Nynex, a US "baby bell" which owns the second-largest cable operator in the UK, are being seen as seri-ous rival hidders. AT&T has already held discussions with C&W over Mercury, but the

price demanded was too high. US West, C&W's partner in the Mercury One-2-One mobile telephone operation, has right of first refusal over the British group's 50 per cent stake, valued at around £800m by analysts.

At present the talks between BT and C&W are only being conducted through merchant hanking advisers - Rothschilds for BT, Goldman Sachs and ING Barings for C&W - and the two sides stress that they are in no hurry to complete a

A BT spokesman yesterday refused to comment, beyond saying that reports the company was ready to sell Mercury to a US consortium of investors were "without foundation". However, the Independent is aware that a huying group has been put together and has made an approach for the company.

BET fires its last shot with payout pledge

CITY & BUSINESS EDITOR: JEREMY WARNER

MAGNUS GRIMOND

BET vesterday forecast a rise of at least 20 per cent in next year's dividend, in what is likely to be its final attempt to see off Rentokil in the £1.9bn bid battle for the services to distribution

group.

BET said in document sent to shareholders last night that dividends for the year to 29 March next year would increase to not less than 6.15p from the 5.1p already forecast for the current year which ended on Friday.

The move is being seen as BET's last shot before day 39 of the hid this Friday, when no further material information can be released to the market under bid rules. The group saw a group of 35 key institutions on Wednesday and intends to use the latest document to ram home its defence in individual hriefings to large shareholders.

The forecast will increase the pressure on Rentokil to raise its offer, although BET shares at 203p, unchanged on Friday. were standing only fractionally clear of Rentokil's terms. With the hidder 4p ahead at 362p, the offer of nine new shares plus 800p in cash for every 20 shares in BET valued the latter at

202.9p.
Sir Christopher Harding, chairman of BET, said the dividend demonstrated once again the board's confidence in BET's future as an independent company, "Rentokil asks you who do you really think will deliver value?' The answer is BET. As an independent company, BET is well positioned to deliver

future growth."

But Rentokil hit back last might. Clive Thompson, chief executive, said he did not place much credibility in the forecast, The dividend was lower than most people had expected, certainly in the circumstances of a

"Having said that, any fore-cast from BET can have very little credibility, because this was the board which halved the dividend twice in 1992 and 1993, despite promises to the contrary. Mr Thompson cited the 1992 annual report, in which it was stated the dividend was being "rebased" to a level from which a progressive dividend

policy could be pursued. He went on: "Dividends can only reasonably be financed from cash flow and at the date of last reporting, at the interim [results], they had net debt of £114m. That reflected a negative cash flow from the previous period, he said.
Mr Thompson's claims drew

an angry response from BET. A spokesman said no analyst had been forecasting such a high dividend for this year, while at the time of the previous dividend cuts management had been clearing up the business and attempting to raise cash. Gearing at 30 per cent was reasonable. he suggested, and reflected an impressive performance, given that capital expenditure was running at up to £170m a year, including £80m of acquisitions in 1995.

The BET document set n series of targets for its six highest growth husinesses, which aim for margins of from 10 per cent or more for distribution services to 33 per cent or more for the education and training division. By way of contrast, it claimed that operating margins outside Rentokil's traditional core sectors have fallen from 18.9 per cent in 1992 to 15.2 per cent last year, suggesting its diversification strategy had failed,

BET's dividend forecast follows its estimate that profits for last year to 29 March would rise 28 per cent to not less than £142m. The group had forecast a dividend of 5.1p for 1995/96.

A lesson in competition ahead of 1998

Flow of new issues is drying up

KPMG, the accountancy and of companies are also casting an

A takeover of Mercury Communications by Deutsche Telckom would give the German group a privileged position in the third largest and most liberalised telccoms market in Europe. writes Magnus Grimond.

lt would also provide useful experience in a liberalised market before the EU is opened up to competition in 1998.

At present the European Union is still dominated by stateowned telecoms operators, apart 150 licensed groups offering ser-

The new issues market contin-

ued to stagnate in the first

quarter of the year despite the

stock market being relatively

stable and within a whisker of

its all time high - usually ideal

In the first three months of

conditions for flotations.

That is set to change, not least following Deutsche's own privatisation, later this year. The sale of the world's third largest telecoms group is likely to be the higgest privatisation yet seen anywhere. With due fanfare, it was kicked off last month by Deutsche chairman Ron Sommer, flanked by Theo Waigel, Germany's finance minister, and Wolfgang Botsch, minister of posts and telecoms. The first tranche of shares. worth £7bn, is scheduled to he

new issues specialist in the cor-

consulting firm, one factor has

been the unexpected success of

the Alternative Investment

Market. The relative ease and

cheapness of gaining an AIM

listing, he believes, has side-

tracked many companies that

might otherwise have gone for

"AIM is clearly the appro-

priate market for smaller com-

the full market.

has been dogged by problems and must still surmount a lack of enthusiasm among both staff and a German populace not used to holding shares. The departure of Mr Sommer's predecessor, Helmut Ricke, in 1994 was said to have been prompted by frustration at his failure to gain agreement from trade unions for large scale

voluntary redundancies. Last November, Mr Sommer reached a deal with the sold to the public in November. unions whereby 60,000 jobs with another due to go in 1998. would be cut by the year 2000, would be cut by the year 2000, made the previous June.

According to Neil Austin, panies as it has a lighter regu-rw issues specialist in the corlatory touch and is easier to favourably with last year's full

eve at the possibility of a change

of government and possibly

consequent higher tax rates.

This provides a spur to sell and

the ready availability of pur-

chasers with cash means a sale

may yield as good a value as a

The cash value of main-

porate finance department of join," Mr Austin said. "Owners year total of £2.6bn.

However, the privatisation reducing the workforce to as been dogged by problems 170,000. But morale within the group is now said to be rock-bottom, with over half the 2,000 senior executives ready to leave. Meanwhile, Deutsche has

not endeared itself to customers with a complicated new tariff this year, which raised charges by an average 3.8 per cent and caused street protests in Berlin. It also disappointed analysts last month when it announced that sales had risen only 4 per cent to DM66hn last year, around DM2bn lower than a forecast

More than two thirds of that,

however, was accounted for by

investment trust flotations,

which raised £709m in the

quarter.

Giant sell-off: Ron Sommer,

Deutsche's chairman

Sears to launch loyalty schemes

NIGEL COPE

Sears, the retail group which includes Selfridges, is set to launch a series of credit cards and loyalty schemes across the group in an attempt to develop a more extensive database on its

The most high-profile flota-tion of the period, the Orange customers' shopping habits. Scars already operates a Sel-fridges credit card which gives mobile phone issue, which exclusive offers on promotions. raised £624m, was not included in KPMG's figures because It is now looking at a system which will enable shoppers to
pay via their normal Visa or
Adam childrens wear chain market flotations between Jan-uary and March was about dealings in the shares remain conditional until 2 April.

on a loyalty scheme. The trial will start this summer.

director ian Cheshire said: "We didn't want to do a Tesco and launch a loyalty card as people can get annoyed about having yet another card in their purse or wallet. This scheme means they can use their normal card and we can still offer rewards while developing our database."

Sears business development count shoe stores and this may The Wallis and Richards

womens' wear groups are testing database schemes that reward customers with early previews of seasonal sales and other promotions.

Sears has employed Dunn-Humby Associates, which worked on Tesco's ClubCard, to analyse the data.

Access card but build up points and hopes to roll it out later this DunnHumby will be looking at year. A "budget" card is under the possible launch of smart trial in the Shoe Express dis- cards to help Sears develop a closer relationship with its 8 mil-

Around 11 per cent of Sears sales are already made using the SearsCard, which has nearly 500,000 accounts. Sears is also considering installing multimedia kiosks in Selfridges linked to customers' charge cards. The idea is the kiosks will "recognise" customers and flash promotions or suggestions on screen.

1996 only 16 companies achieved full listings, down from 22 in the first quarter of 1995, itself a disappointing year.

IN BRIEF

TOM STEVENSON

City Editor

 Maiden Group, the outdoor advertising company, is to announce today it intends to seek a listing on the London Stock Exchange, aimed at raising £20m. Its advisers forecast a market capitalisation of not less than £65m. The company, a UK leader in largeshect outdoor adverts, intends to use the proceeds to reduce debt.

 Carlton Communications, Michael Green's media company, saw its share of revenues from advertising on ITV fall in London year-on-year in the first quarter, according to ITV's own figures. Carlton, which runs the ITV franchise for London in the week, saw its share drop year-on-year to just over 16 per cent from 17.3 per cent in Fehruary alone, largely at the hands of Granada's LWT, the franchise holder for London weekend, whose share jumped by 15 per cent.

 The UK economy is set to expand by 2.3 per cent in 1996, and next year could be the country's best for consumer spending since 1989, according to the latest forecast by the Ernest & Young Item Club. The recent period of slow growth was a result of a temporary stock adjustment, the group says, adding that sufficient measures have already been taken to ensure that unemployment is prevented from rising significantly over the next 12 months.

 High Street banks will have to invest £300m each to prepare for the introduction of a single currency, according to figures published today by BMS Bossard, the European management con-sultancy. The figure could rise to £500m if the banks delay further.

 Gtaxo-Wellcome, the leading British drugs company, has ended controversial payments made to certain directors for acting as pension fund trustees. The payments of up to £20,000 a year came on top of other directors' remuneration, and were viewed as being inconsistent with the recommendations of the Green bury report on directors' pay.

UK labour record challenged

DIANE COYLE Economics Editor

flotation."

Britain's job creation record is little better than that of its main industrialised rivals, according to a new report published today.

The study, released to coincide with the start of the twoday Group of Seven jobs summit in Lille, France, is likely to disappoint the British government, which hopes that the summit of the big industrial countries will endorse its view that deregulation of the labour market is the most effective way to create jobs and reduce un-

employment.
The independent Employment Policy Institute argues that the only time employment growth in Britain has heen nigher than in the other G7 countries was during the un-sustainable late-1980s boom.

"The pay-off in terms of extra jobs in Britain has not been spectacular in European terms, let alone in comparison with the

G7 unemp	loyment
ra	rte (%)
US Japan	5.5 3.3
Germany France	11.1 11.8
Italy	12.2 7.9
Canada	9.6
Average	8.8

US," according to EPI director John Philpott. Some officials from other

countries at the summit predict that the event will be a damp squib. Partly due to British insistence that contentious issues should be kept off the agenda, the final statement is likely to he a "lowest common denominator" endorsement of sound macro-economic policy and structural reform.

This means that some countries are unenthusiastic about the meeting of employment and Treasury ministers. The US and France, for example, would have liked to include the scope for "social clauses" in trade agreements. These would incorporate trade penalties against developing countries deemed to have an unfair cost advantage by exploiting child labour or indentured workers, for example. But Britain was joined by Canada and Japan in opposing a discussion.

The Americans would also have liked to include an assessment of active government lahour market programmes

such as retraining.

A further dampener will be the mability of France and Germany to admit that unemployment could be made worse by the need for European countries to reduce their government deficits simultaneously in order to qualify for the single currency. All of the governments stress the importance of deficit reduction - or "fiscal consolidation" in the G7 jargon.

The tone for the summit will be set by an opening paper presented today by Jean-Claude Paye, the outgoing director general of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Drawing on work commissioned by the last G7 jobs summit, in Detroit two years ago, the OECD emphasises the need for growth based on higher skills and knowledge. It will stress that governments

play an essential role in this. The rich countries' think tank has already criticised Britain for weaknesses in education and training. These shortcomings are acknowledged by Employment and Education Minister Gillian Shepherd, who is eager to avoid a triumphalist tone about Britain's relatively low un-employment rate. "We lag behind our competitors in areas such as skill levels." she says.

The summit will focus tomorrow on how to improve joh prospects and incomes for the unskilled and others "excluded" from the jobs market.

"How could anyone leave poor Gypsy to suffer like this?"

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of careful rehabilitation at the ILPH, Gypsy made a full recovery. It's lucky we found her in time. It's horrific that suffering like this still occurs in Britain."

Clave Chapman Head Girl. ILPH Rest & Rehabilitation Centre, Norfolk.

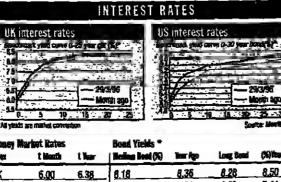
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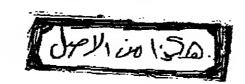
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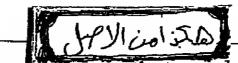


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CURRENCIES





business

GAVYN DAVIES

st of the beef chiefe

ak: Caution expected

DATES CREADING

The implication was that the Government would now take action that it considered entirely unnecessary. just to get mad cows off the front pages. But it was hard to see

how this could restore

confidence to the

beef consumer

Solving the beef crisis need not cost an arm | a major human epidemic or, to be honest, | hinted that anyone who recommended such | Sand a leg. Before the weekend, many commentators had concluded that the BSE episode could represent the last nail in the political coffin of this Government. This always seemed a vast exaggeration, fauned by absurdly inflated estimates of the likely economic costs of a slaughter policy by City analysts. It was never very plausible that the Government would allow its pre-election tax cuts to go up in smoke with a few million unfortunate cattle. But now it is becoming ap-

parent that a solution can be found to this

crisis which will not cost an arm and a leg.

and which will put beef back on the menu for next Sunday's lunch. If the BSE problem does have a long-term political fall-out, it will not be because of its modest economic consequences, but because of the way it has been handled by ministers. Admittedly, it is always easy to be critical of Government in hindsight. I do not usually share the cynical view that the Major government has been uncommonly weak or vacillating. Most of its problems have been born of Tory longevity - there is simply no one else to blame for today's accidents. But even its greatest fans would concede that this has not been the finest hour

of John Major's administration. OK, the situation was never going to be easy. Roughly paraphrased, the Government was faced with a scientific report which said the following: "We have been claiming for 10 years that there was no evidence of any link between BSE in cattle and CJD in humans. Now we have news of a handful of cases of CJD which seem different from anything we have seen before. We haven't got the foggiest idea whether this is the start of

whether these new cases have anything to do with eating beef. But they might. We don't have a clue how BSE is spread from one cow to another, and we are not very good at testing for its existence in any given animal. We are not sure what is the best way to eradicate the disease in cattle, but we think you are probably doing most of the right things. We don't have any new ideas about what to do next. Yours ever - some very eminent scientists.

With scientists like that, who needs enemies? But even allowing for the trickiness of the situation, the Government's first response looked indecisive. For example, it was not very helpful of Stephen Dorrell to keep telling people to make up their minds whether to eat beef "on the advice of the scientisis". Unfortunately, there was no advice from the scientists or at least nothing that any ordinary cit-

needed, and quickly. This took well over a week to L emerge. The Government started by claiming there was no need for any important new measures, since all the necessary action had been taken years be fore. Then Douglas Hogg talked (admittedly behind the cover of off-the-record briefings) about culling 4.5 million cattle, and speculated about slaughtering the whole herd. Next day, the

shughtering was necessary, and

zen could fathom. Instead, an

effective political response was

slaughtering would occur, not for scientific reasons but as a response to "market hysteria".

The cost of putting beef back on the menu

The implication was that the Government would now take action that it considered entirely unnecessary, just to get mad cows off the front pages. But it was hard to see how this could restore confidence to the beef consumer, since unnecessary action can, by definition, have no effect on the safety of eating beef. What was really needed was new action which would recognise the new situation and genuinely decrease the chances of BSE infecting humans. Eventually, in the latter stages of last week, a sensible package seemed to be emerging in talks between the UK and the European Commission.

The economic impact of 'mad cow' disease

+08

a course was showing the symptoms of eating | do, the Government risked annoying almost too much infected offal. Two days later, the everybody at one time or another. From the Prime Minister announced that further outset, there were only three candidates for incurring the costs of the BSE accident - the farmers, the UK taxpayer (usually known as the Government"), and the EU. None of these groups was likely to be a happy

In strict logic, it might have been thought that the farmers should incur the costs, since they were the ones that were feeding potentially unsafe food to the consumer. (As far as I am aware, no one has so far suggested that we should compensate kebab shops for giving their customers salmonella.) But, in reality, no government seems able to incur the political wrath of the farmers, so this was

a non starter. Nevertbeless, the "no culling" policy adopted early last week necessarily iovolved off-loading the costs on to the farmer. The mar-

ket collapsed, but the beef could not be sold into the EU's intervention stock, since it had been deemed unsafe for human consumption. Farmers concluded that they had been left holding the baby. Consumers, meanwhile, felt that the Government was taking risks with their health in order to save money for preelection tax cuts. The EU complained that Britain was trying to make other countries pay the costs of its unsafe farm practices over the previous decade. The cattle, contemplating an extension to their life expectancy, were

While it was making up its mind what to | the only interest group obviously delighted by a "no culling" policy.

> O what should have been done? Faced with The new information from the scientists, but in the absence of clear scientific advice on how to proceed, the Government should have announced that this was a new situation which required a "belt and braces" approach to policy. While previous measures had represented a sensible response to earlier information, new steps were now needed to ensure that no BSE infected meat could pos-

sibh get into the human or animal food chain. In particular, this would involve two specific new measures. First, dairy cows reaching the end of their working lives - about 800,000 per year - should be incinerated instead of being sold for animal feed. And all beef cattle over 30 months old – about 700,000 in total – should be culled. Since there is virtually no evidence of cows younger than that getting BSE, this would effectively have solved the problem. The total cost of this policy would have been £1.6bn in the first year, up to a balf of which would probably have been wrung out of the EU, and much of the rest could have been found in the Treasury's contingency reserve. Any excess would have been a rounding error in the PSBR calculations, so it would have had no effect on the prospects for tax cuts. And there would have been no excuse whatever for the EU - plagued by its own BSE problems on the Continent - to have banned British beef.

Something very like this package will probably now emerge. A lot of political angst could have been avoided by announcing it

The arms procurement minister tells Russell Hotten how he hopes to convince Britain's defence companies he is on their side

+4.5

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Block likely option
5. Staughter beef cattle
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3. Slaughter all cante over 30 months old

"First year effects

Defence witness: James Arbuthnot denles any behindthe-scenes power struggle between the MoD and DTI

Roberto Schisano, Italy's oa-

tional flagship service has barely

three months to live. "If a dras-

tic cure does not arrive within

100 days," he told a magazine

not made a profit io eight years

and is currently losing around

one billion lire a day. For the last

few months it has been selling

off valuable interests, such as its

majority stake in the Rome

The MoD door opens a little wider for industry After years of Thatcherite em-

phasis on competition and open markets. Britain's defence companies sense a subtle shift in the policies of the Ministry of Defence. The conventions of MoDspeak mean that officials cannot actually call it a change, But cut through the weasel-words, and it is clear the Government is empbasising anew the importance of supporting the UK industrial base and fomenting closer collaboration with European defence companies.

Of course James Arbuthnot, eight months into his job as defence procurement minister, denies that such considerations have ever been far from the thoughts of MoD officials. But executives at the coalface of the defence industry have often wondered whether the MoD really understood the needs of British companies.

to create a protected British defence industry," Mr Arbuthnot says. "But procurement policy has to take a more systematic account of the industrial issues." Mr Arbuthnot, an archetypal

Tory whose background includes Eton. Cambridge and the law, bas worked as an assistant whip, and private secretary to both Peter Lilley and Archie Hamilton, but the MoD is the biggest opportunity yet to advance his political ambitions.

He'li have plenty of work, not least in convincing the defence industry that the Government has the sector's best interests at heart. Recent orders, especially last year's award of a helicopter contract to America's McDonnell Douglas, caused some concern for people worried about jobs and

Britain's technological base, The Whitehall rumour mill has been rife with talk that the MoD was pushed into adopting a more coherent industrial procurement policy by the DTI, Mr Arbuthnot says a sub-committee of the National Defence Industries Council, made up of businessmen and MoD officials, will now have a greater input in procurement decisions.

He acknowledges that the role of the DTI will become more important but denies suggestions of a departmental power struggle behind the scenes. "The DTI is concerned with helping industry, whereas the MoD is British industry's single biggest customer. There is an obvious tension between these two interests. But we are

having value for money, and bay-

not count on the entrenched

power of the unions, who quick-

y identified him as public en-

emy number one - "the Texan"

as they disparagingly called him. Last June, 340 pilots all called in sick with colds at the

same time; in response, Mr Schisano bad them ordered

back to work on pain of crimi-

nal charges and sent the tax po-

lice to investigate their private

financial affairs. Moreover, he

began the highly unpopular

policy of sub-contracting pilot-

ing and cabin crew jobs to an

Australian company whose staff

But Mr Schisano was not

simply tough, be was devious

too. While castigating the pilots

in public, he secretly negotiat-

ed a 28 billion lire pay rise for

them. When news of the deal

broke last autumn, Mr Riverso

and the management of IRI

were so furious that he was sum-

Mr Riverso resumed talks

with the pilots using a more con-

ciliatory line, but he got no fur-

ther than his unhappy erstwhile

colleague. Earlier this month he

resigned, accusing the unions of

intransigence and blaming an

"inert, mute and passive" IRI

Alitalia is now in the hands

mer head of the Rome airport

authority. But the restructuring

strategy is in tatters and the long

contractual negotiations are

marily fired.

for lack of nerve.

back at square one.

were 35 per cent cheaper.

THE MONDAY INTERVIEW

JAMES ARBUTHNOT

Source, David Walton & Martin Brookes, Goldman Sachs

"What we are interested in is cross-border mergers between companies in different countries, so that there can be a genuine rationalisation of defence

Mr Arbuthnot acknowledges that in a world of smaller defence budgets, maintaining competition is not always possible. But he rejects suggestions that the MoD's own warship procurement policies have encouraged the reduction in the UK's ship-

building capacity. Last month's order for Type

23 frigates is evidence that comneution in UK shipbuilding is working, he says. Even so, analysts believe there was only ever going to be one winner for the order, GEC's Yarrow shipyard, because rival Vosper Thornveroft

no longer has the facilities. "The award of the order was the result of a competition, and Yarrow won by putting in a significantly lower price," Mr Arbuthnot says. "The fact that

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the end of competition.

Even so, he is clear that MoD orders alone will not keep UK shipbuilding afloat. Vosper. Yarrow and VSEL will have to continue to diversify if they are

to survive, he says. With the defence industry in such a state of flux, the procurement ministry is a department where an ambitious MP can

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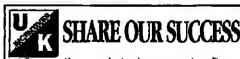
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airport authority, but the extra cash seems to disappear almost as soon as it arrives. The arithmetic is as simple as it is frightening: unless the company can rapidly attract substantial new capital, its assets will have dried up by the end of the year at the latest. It wouldn't be the first national carrier in the world to go bust, but its disappearance would be a severe blow to Italy's fragile sense of national pade - not to mention putting more than 18,000 peo-ple out of work.

We're not a country of idiots. Surely we'are capable of saving Alitalia, the Italian prime minister, I amediae Dini, exclaimed recently Capable perbaps, but willing a smother matter. The state holding company IR1, which has a 9 sper cent stake in Alitalia has promised a 1.5 trillion lire as promised and the first is a settlement of a long industrial dispute with the carrier's pilots who have staged We re not a country of idiols.

pay and conditions. And the second, stipulated not by IRI but by the European Commission, which must give its consent to any recapitalisation, is a credicompany's runaway finances

interviewer last week, "our airlines will disappear from the under control. The figures make depressing reading. Alitalia bas debts of around 3.5 trillion lire (£1.5bn). being fulfilled. but only 500 or 600 billion lire Both bave in liquid assets. The airline has

scuppered by an near-total

been

breakdown in communicatioo between management and the unions - a clasb which says as much about post-war Italian political and industrial culture as it does about the problems of yet another ail-

VIEW FROM ROME

ing European airline. For much of the period Alitalia was, like all large statecontrolled concerns in Italy, a plaything of the powerful, wbo were far more concerned about vear plan to cut operating costs carving up jobs and handing out favours than about operating a viable public service. The unions connived with this,

gether they formulated a three-

costs by 20 per cent. But in the end they had



Costing the skies: The airline has debts of £1.5bn

"What we do not want to do ive an impression that we want

That is why the MoD looks

certain to oppose any attempts by British Aerospace and GEC to bring their operations together and create a national defence champion. Negotiations about closer ties appear to have been shelved for the moment.

Mr Arbuthnot will not voice any outright opposition to a merger, but the hints are strong enough. "It is no secret that to have a national champion would cause us some difficulty because our long-term interest is

But the issue is strongly tipped to be back on the agenda once George Simpson gets his feet un-der the table at GEC.

ing good competition.

A final attempt to save Alitalia

According to Alitalia's former managing director, Paleone Schimmer Managing director, Paleone Schimmer Managing director, Schimmer Managing director, Paleone Schimmer Managing director, Paleone Schimmer Managing director, Schimmer Managing director, Paleone Managing director, Paleon scarcely more luck than Mr Berlusconi, who was hounded out of office after seven months Mr Schisano, in particular, did

cent.

After rec-

In the late 1980s, the money began to dry up, but the free-loading did not. In 1992, Alitalia's costs were 5.9 per cent ble business plan to bring the higher than the average European airline, and 24.6 per cent higher than British Airways'. In Unfortunately, oeither con- the four years since then, the cost dition looks anywhere near of one pilot bour has soared nearly 80 per

> ord losses in 1993, IRI finally called in a new management team headed by Renato Riverso, a senior executive with IBM, and Mr Schisano, who was working with Texas Instruments. At much the same time that media tycoon Silvio Berlusconi was promising Italy a free-market revolution, the two men vowed they would inject a US management style into the Alitalia bureaucracy. To-

by 12 per cent and personnel



Andrew Gumbel

The aquatic apewoman

We're naked because we evolved in tropical seas. **Andrew Brown** meets the writer who has set the Internet buzzing with a forgotten theory

n a Victorian house in a Welsh mining village lives a 75-year-old woman with no scientific training and a startling theory about human evolution, which she has defended in numerous books and now in "flame" (ie. insult) wars raging on the Internet. And if the world is too full of people with startling theories of human evolution, what makes Elaine Morgan unique is that her theory may very well be true.

The Aquatic Ape theory holds that humans differ from other primates because their ancestors spent some evolutionarily significant time as wading and swimming animals. She discovered it in the writings of Sir Alister Hardy, FRS, an enormously distinguished zoologist who noted in 1965 that most of the adaptations that distinguish humans from chimpanzees, say, are also found in aquatic animals and not elsewhere.

Hardy's idea was largely ignored. It was Elaine Morgan who popularised the theory, first in *The Descent of Woman*, a bestseller in 1972; and in a succession of later books, of which *The Descent of the Child* has just been reissued in paperback.

All these look at the differences between humans and

ences hetween humans and other primates and argue that most of the remarkable ones are best explained by supposing that our ancestors spent a million years or so as shoreline-dwellers. There they lost their fur and developed fat for insulation instead; there, with the water to huoy them up, they had to learn to walk upright. She has even argued that the water's dazzle made vocal language necessary because the traditional primate "language" of gestures and facial expression was harder to use in that environment.

When she came across the Aquatic Ape theory she was 52 with a long and successful career as a television writer behind her, having started in television's pioneer days. The first few times a play of hers was broadcast she and her husband had to ask a neighbour if they could go round to watch it. Later, she won Bafta awards and dramatised A Testament of Youth. Her controversial writings are more elegant, clear and vigorous than most popular sci-



Origin of the species: Elaine Morgan, from South Wales, debates her Aquatic Ape theory on the Internet

versities, a pseudo-scientific ence and, by the same token, incomparably more persuasive dream of prelapsarian paradise and easier to follow than real by a warm Indian ocean: "The science. No wonder her prosort of place where deadheads fessional readers regard her would feel at home," one gradwith suspicion. She also underuate student wrote contemptuously on the Net. stands evolution and natural selection - a much rarer accomplishment than it ought to be: like Stephen Jay Gould, she

There is a certain irony in this fatc, for The Descent of Woman, the first aquatic ape sees that the most powerful evidence of evolution is not the book, was not inspired by scientific zeal so much as by zeal against pseudo-science: the perfection of our adaptations, ut their imperfections.

Yet Morgan has no formal

Myth of primitive man as a hunter and killer which was but their imperfections.

'It seems a remarkably consistent pattern that the things that we have got, like the naked skin and the fat, are adaptations found in aquatic mammals'

scientific training, no formal links with any university. Until she discovered the Net, she had no regular correspondence with palaeontologists. She writes for the reasonable, intelligent and generally educated outsider, and she thinks as one, too. No wonder academics assume she must be wrong.

There are further problems. The academic standing of the Aquatic Ape theory "has been weakened because it is the undergraduates who pick it up: and if you're a professor of anthropology, you hear this stuff coming out of the mouths of people you know are nits so you don't take it seriously," she says. The Aquatic Ape theory seems to have become one of

propounded in the late Sixties in hugely popular books by Robert Ardrey and Desmond Morris. Morris has since come out in favour of the aquatic ape hypothesis. The original evidence for man's primal ancestor as a hunter and possibly murderer was produced by Raymond Dart, a distinguished

South African palaeontologist. Man as hunter has since been discredited as science, hut not before it was hugely influential as a myth of origin. The idea that we evolved at a time when men were apemen and women were clubbable, is still pervasive in our culture today; when Morgan wrote her first hook, the savannah theory seemed to have the the folk myths of American uni- authority of science behind it,

too. So in The Descent of Woman the Aquatic Ape theory emerged as a work of feminism. The real enemy was not the palaeontological estahlishment, but the Flintstones.

Over the years her arguments have grown more sophisticated, hut she didn't have her books read by professionals. She just plugged away, convinced that common sense and application could not lead her too far astray. "I would go up and listen to lec-tures if I beard they were coming off, but I am not connected with any university."

But when she discovered the Net last autumn her position changed radically. "Now I'm learning what are the weak points of the theory. My approach has been to start from the fact that we are remarkably different in a remarkable amount of ways from ou est relatives and to try to find an explanation. It sees to me a remarkably consistent pattern that the things that we have got, like the naked skin and the fat, are adaptations found in aquatic

The elegance and economy of the central thrust of the theory has won her a distinguished fan chib. Daniel Dennett, probably the world's most fashionable philosopher, gave her three pages of consideration in his latest book, Durwin's Dangerous Idea. When she was last in Oxford, she was taken to supper by Douglas Adams and Richard Dawkins. The hypothesis has been treated imaginatively in a novel by Peter Dickinson. None of these people, however, are palaeoanthropologists; and on the Net Morgan's ideas are handled more roughly.

An Laster Bouquet

From Jersey with Love

with Love

Hairy legs are sexier, especially for spiders

Male animals go to extreme lengths to attract the opposite sex. Sanjida O'Connell reports

Temales are fickle. Once they decide something's attractive, any male who wants a look-in has to have it or grow it. Witness the beautiful tail of the peacock. In the mating game, males fight or display to females who then choose the higgest or the brightest male. Widow birds, for example, have exceptionally long tails and females go for the male with the longest, even if the tail is beyond the realms of hiological possibility and has been enhanced with glue, spare feathers and the aid of a biologist. Female zehra finches are so capricious, they will pick males with red plastic rings

around their legs.

Now animal behaviourists Dr Sonja Scheffer, from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, George Uetz, from Alhion College, and Gail Stratton, from the University of Cincinnati, have discovered that male brush-legged wolf spiders have evolved hlack bristly tufts of hair on their front legs to attract females.

The spiders, which live in leaf litter in east American forests, have an elaborate courtship that involves waving and arching their legs at a female. The aim of the game is to mate with her, but in the case of these spiders. as in many of their brunch is of equal consideration. Females that are not ready to mate will lunge towards males with fangs bared and, if given the chance, will kill and eat them. Nearly half of all males are cannibalised after copulation - a male spider's tactic is to freeze in the hope she'll think he's a leaf and not lunch.

you would never post."
The immediate polemical

style that the Nct encourages

- a mixture between corre-

spondence chess and bomb-

throwing - gives a professional writer and amateur scientist

great advantages over some-

one with the reverse of these

qualifications. The best a sci-

entist can say is that the evi-

dence is patchy, incomplete,

and certainly does not estab-lish her case. You tell from a

skeleton whether its owner

once walked upright, hut you

cannot tell whether they did so

in water, or on land; nor

whether they were hairy and

is abhorrent. Only time will tell

whether the Aquatic Ape

Such a vacuum in prehistory

thin or chulby and naked.

One of her virtual oppo-

nents wrote: "I attempt to

demonstrate that your research

cannot he counted on to have

factual content. Thanks to you,

I am repeatedly successful at doing so. I make a point of not

saying you are a deliberate liar. However, since the only

other explanation I can think of

is that you are an incredibly

poor and unreliable researcher,

this is probably of small com-

She seems rather to enjoy this treatment. "A fellow I

came across on the Net spent

his first three letters saying.

Nobody believes you' as if that

was any kind of argument. Of course, you do tend to log in at

the end of a long day, and write things which, if they found

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their way into ordinary letters, theory holds water.

fort to you."

Dr Scheffer and her col-leagues wondered whether the male's hristly hits were crucial to a female spider's idea of sex-iness. They offered females a choice of two males: one complete with tufts, and one that

preference for males with or without tufts. They mated with the bravest - or most foolhardy - male who was the first to court them. The researchers then tried another approach. They prevented the females from listening to the males.

Ministe axe pla to cut

pollutic

As well as the elaborate leg waving procedure, males signal to the females by sending vibrato the females by sending that tions along the ground using their stridulatory organs. The researchers deprived the spi-ders of sound by placing them on insulating foam. Without the benefit of this extra sense, the females chose males who still had tufts and spurned the short



spiders. Dr Scheffer concluded that tufts are essential in the mating arena. Female spiders have got good eye-sight but vibrations do not travel well along the forest floor. A male will thus come into a female's visual range long before she can hear who he is. Since females are prope to eat males once they have performed their function, and are partial to other species of spider, it makes sense for a male to advertise as well as as he can who he is and what he is about. A spider's tufts may also act as signal to other mules. When spiders live in high den-sities, they establish the arachnid equivalent of a pecking order. Presumably those with the researchers had shaved. the higgest hristles get to be up.
The females seemed to show no of the leaf litter.

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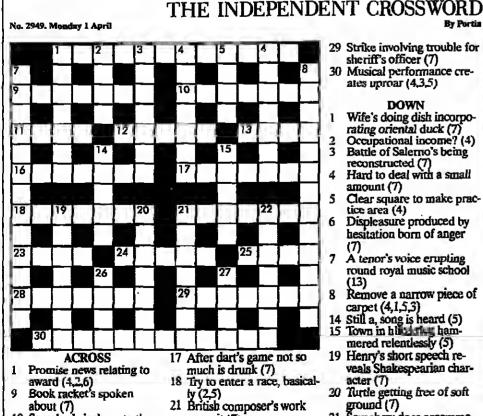
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carns it (7)

copper (4)

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tor being surly (5)
25 Handic travelling bag (4)

24 Nonsense talked about rec-

about (7) 10 Somebody isn't up to the joh (7) 11 Consult party leader who's

showing strain (4)
12 Black female with follow-

ing in Canada (5) 13 Average fine (4)16 Offensive by the French causes resentment (7)

29 Strike involving trouble for sheriff's officer (7) 30 Musical performance creates uproar (4,3,5)

DOWN Wife's doing dish incorporating oriental duck (7)

Occupational income? (4) Battle of Salerno's being reconstructed (7) Hard to deal with a small amount (7)

Clear square to make pracuce area (4) Displeasure produced by hesitation born of anger

A tenor's voice erupting round royal music school Remove a narrow piece of

carpet (4,1,5,3) Still a, song is heard (5) Town in histories, ham-mered relentlessly (5) 19 Henry's short speech reveals Shakespearian char-

acter (7) 20 Turtle getting free of soft ground (7) 21 Somehow does accommodate really great piece of furniture (4-3)

22 Assurance given about popular drug (7) 26 Told to squeeze to produce 28 Check out temperature of sound (4) second Australian wine (7) 27 Initial evidence (4)

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